NATION

SC picked SIT gives Vantara clean chit

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I-T filing portal faces glitch; no extension for deadline

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SPORTS

Central Zone beats South by six wickets

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Pak irate as India refuses to shake hands

DUBAI, 15 SEPT

The Indian players' refusal to exchange handshakes with their Pakistani counterparts after the Asia Cup clash here snowballed into a major controversy on Monday as an irate PCB sought the removal of match referee Andy Pycroft.

According to Pakistan team manager Naved Cheema, Pycroft had instructed captain Salman Ali Agha during the toss not to exchange handshakes with Indian skipper Suryakumar Yadav. Additionally, it was claimed that Pycroft advised against the customary exchange of team sheets between captains. A formal complaint has been lodged with the Asian Cricket Council (ACC).

India's stand was defended by Suryakumar Yadav after their seven-wicket win, citing the move as a mark of solidarity with the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack, where 26 people were killed by Pakistan-backed terrorists.

The match faced public backlash for being played despite tensions, with critics questioning why fixtures in other sports against Pakistan were cancelled, but not this.

The PCB, already irked, has escalated the issue to the International Cricket Council (ICC), although the Asia Cup is governed by the ACC, not the ICC. Notably, PCB Chief Mohsin Naqvi currently heads the ACC, while ICC chairman Jay Shah is from India.

It is also learnt that if India make the tournament's final on 28 September, the players won't be sharing the presentation dais with Naqvi, who is expected to hand over the winner's trophy as ACC head

When a Pakistani journalist asked whether the refusal to shake hands with opposition players after the seven-wicket win was "politically motivated", the skipper replied: "I feel few things, few things in life are ahead of sportsman's spirit also. We stand with victims of Pahalgam terror attack and dedicate this victory to our Armed Forces." —*PTI*

>>>More on Pages 3 & 8

> **Gambling of 1.5 lakh crore took place in yesterday's match of which Rs 25,000 crore went to Pakistan. This money will be used against us. Doesn't the government or the BCCI know it**
>
> —Sanjay Raut, Sena (UBT)leader

SC stalls key clauses but refuses to stay Waqf law

SC strikes down powers of collectors, caps number of non-Muslims on boards

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

Supreme Court on Monday stayed several key provisions of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, but refused to suspend the entire law, citing the legal presumption of constitutionality in favour of legislation.

A bench led by Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih issued a 128-page interim order, stating that courts should be "very slow" in granting interim relief against enacted laws, except in "rare and exceptional cases."

"Presumption is always in favour of constitutionality. We do not find that any case is made to stay the entire statute," the court noted, dismissing calls to halt the Act completely.

However, to "protect the interest of parties" and "balance the equities," the bench paused the implementation of specific provisions, pending final adjudication.

The key provisions stayed are:

1. Requirement that only those practising Islam for at least five years can create a Waqf, stayed until states frame a proper mechanism to determine such practice.
2. Provision granting powers to collectors to decide Waqf property status.
3. Court said that Central Waqf Council can only have four non-Muslim members (out of 20); State Waqf Boards capped at three (out of 11).
4. Provision that Waqf status of a property depends on a designated officer's report stayed.
5. A designated officer cannot decide a property is government land and not Waqf. They have to update land records and submit a report to the state government.

The court also said that "efforts should be made to appoint the chief executive officer of the board from amongst the Muslim community".

The court clarified that no Waqf can be dispossessed of property or have revenue records altered until the Waqf Tribunal adjudicates the title dispute under Section 83, and subject to further High Court orders.

The order is interim and will not restrict either side from making full arguments on the law's constitutional validity during final hearings.

In August last year, the Centre introduced a bill to amend 44 sections of the Waqf Act of 1955 in the Parliament and kick-started a legal and political row, which included violent protests in parts of the country and three deaths in Bengal. —*PTI*

>>>More on Pages 2, 3 & 5

> **I believe that whatever the apex court has ruled is a very good sign for our democracy**
>
> —Kiren Rijiju, Minority Affairs Minister

HC rejects pleas against Mushtaq's Dasara invite

BENGALURU, 15 SEPT

The Karnataka High Court on Monday dismissed the petitions challenging the State government's decision to invite International Booker Prize winner Banu Mushtaq to inaugurate the Mysuru Dasara festivities this year. A division bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bhakru and Justice CM Joshi declined to entertain four public interest litigations (PIL), including the one filed by former Mysuru BJP MP Pratap Simha, stating that the petitioners had failed to demonstrate any constitutional or legal violation. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

Kuki leader's home 'torched' in Manipur day after PM's visit

CHURACHANDPUR, 15 SEPT

Tensions flared in Manipur's Churachandpur district after the residence of a Kuki leader was allegedly set on fire by a mob, officials said on Monday. This comes just two days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the state after two years of violence.

The residence of Kuki National Organisation (KNO) leader Calvin Aikhenthang was torched late on Sunday night, they claimed. However, some locals claimed that it was due to a short circuit.

KNO is a signatory to the Suspension of Operations (SoO) pact with the Centre.

Another Kuki leader Ginza Vualzong's home, who is the spokesperson of Kuki Zo Council (KZC) and the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF), was also targeted by miscreants, but locals intervened to save the house from being set on fire.

On 4 September, two Kuki-Zo groups signed the SoO with the Centre, agreeing to relocate camps away from vulnerable areas and work on a peace formula.

Civil society group Kuki-Zo Council (KZC) had decided to open National Highway-2. However, on Monday, KZC clarified that it has not "declared the reopening of NH-2" and that "no free movement has been permitted."

It said it only asked people to maintain "safety of commuters" and asserted that the Centre's statement had been "misinterpreted".

The council said, "As there is still no settlement or agreement between the Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities, no one from either side should cross". —*PTI*

Cheetah dies in Kuno, leopard attack suspected

KUNO, 15 SEPT

A 20-month-old female cheetah was found dead in the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district on Monday, a forest department official said. The carcass of the big cat, born to African cheetah Jwala, was found at around 6.30 pm and officials suspect she died in a leopard attack. The preliminary cause of death appears to be a fight with a leopard though the exact reason will be known after the post-mortem report is received, he added. As of mid-2025, 11 cheetahs have died in Kuno since the start of Project Cheetah —*PTI*

Modi calls for reforms at defence conference

KOLKATA, 15 SEPT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday inaugurated the 16th Combined Commanders' Conference (CCC) at Vijay Durg (erstwhile Fort William) in Kolkata, declaring 2025 as the 'Year of Reforms' in defence. He urged the Ministry of Defence to implement swift steps towards jointness, Aatmanirbharta (self-reliance), and innovation. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, NSA Ajit Doval, CDS Gen Anil Chauhan, Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh, and the three service chiefs were present. The biennial CCC, held last in Bhopal (2023), is the apex military brainstorming forum. This edition, themed 'Transforming for the Future', follows Operation Sindoor, and focuses on reforms and operational preparedness. —*PTI*

US negotiator reaches India for trade talks

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

Trump administration's chief negotiator Brendan Lynch is arriving here on Monday night to hold a day-long talk on India-US bilateral trade deal. Trade ties are at all time low due to 50 per cent import tariffs by the US on Indian goods.

The meeting comes days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcomed US President Donald Trump's positive assessment of trade ties between the two nations.

Five rounds of negotiations for the India-US bilateral trade agreement (BTA) have been held, and the sixth round of talks, scheduled from 25-29 August, was postponed following the tariffs.

"It is not the sixth round of negotiations but it is definitely discussions on the trade talks and trying to see how we can reach an agreement," Rajesh Agarwal, India's chief negotiator and a special secretary in the commerce ministry said.

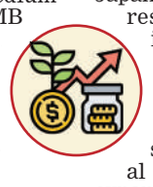
He added that India and the US have had virtual discussions on a weekly basis. Lynch is the Assistant US Trade Representative for South and Central Asia. He oversees the US trade policy with regard to 15 countries, including management of the US-India Trade Policy Forum (TPF). The Trump administration has imposed 50 per cent tariffs on India, including 25 per cent for Delhi's purchases of Russian oil, among the highest imposed on any country.

Meanwhile, Moscow on Sunday said its relationship with Delhi is time-tested and progressing "steadily," warning that any attempt to disturb the ties is "destined to fail." —*PTI*

Japan to invest Rs 4,000 cr in K'taka

BENGALURU, 15 SEPT

Karnataka Large and Medium Industries Minister MB Patil on Monday said that investments worth Rs 4,000 crore have been confirmed during the recently concluded visit to Japan, by the delegation led by him.



He said that these new investments by some of Japan's leading companies would further strengthen the existing industrial ecosystem in Karnataka.

He said the earlier visit to Japan and South Korea had resulted in attracting investments of around Rs 6,500 crore, a statement from the minister's office said. During the latest visit, discussions were held on several projects, including the expansion plans of Honda and a proposal by Sumitomo, in collaboration with Mukand Sumi, to set up a steel plant, he said. —*PTI*

CHARRED IN MINUTES

Driver, crew save the day as BMTC bus catches fire in City

BENGALURU, 15 SEPT

A major tragedy was averted early Monday morning when a BMTC bus with 50 passengers on board caught fire near the HAL bus stop in Bengaluru. Fortunately, all passengers escaped safely, thanks to the swift action of the bus crew.

The incident occurred around 5.10 am on the KBS (Majestic)–Kadugodi route when smoke began emerging from the engine compartment of the 860 BS-VI model bus. Within minutes, flames engulfed the entire vehicle.

Driver Jayachandra and conductor Chowdappa reacted quickly upon spotting smoke and a small fire. They immediately alerted passengers and evacuated the fully occupied bus, ensuring no one was injured. Fire and Emergency Services were called and reached the scene promptly. However, by the time the blaze was brought under control, the bus had been completely gutted.

The incident falls under the HAL Police Station jurisdiction. The BMTC has formed a team to investigate the cause of the fire. This incident comes weeks after a man was burnt alive when an abandoned school bus caught fire in the OMBR Layout of Banaswadi on 14 August. — *Salar News*

First smoke began emerging from the engine compartment of the bus. Within minutes, flames engulfed the bus **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

- Driver Jayachandra and conductor Chowdappa reacted quickly upon spotting smoke and a small fire. They immediately evacuated the fully occupied bus.

Karnataka mulls inclusion of Kurubas under ST

BENGALURU, 15 SEPT

The Karnataka government is considering the inclusion of the Kuruba community, to which Chief Minister Siddaramaiah belongs, under the Scheduled Tribes (ST) category.

A key meeting is expected on Tuesday, chaired by the ST Welfare Department Secretary, to deliberate this and the inclusion of Kurubas from Bidar, Kalaburagi, and Yadgir districts as a synonym of the Gonda community.

Currently categorised as OBC under Category 2A, Kurubas receive 15 per cent of the 32 per cent reservation allocated to OBCs in the state.

Rural Development Minister Priyank Kharge said the Congress government had earlier recommended ST status for Kurubas and Kolis, but the Centre sought clarifications based on anthropological criteria. BJP's R Ashoka urged the government to follow constitutional procedures.

For ST status, a State recommendation must be approved by the Centre, in line with constitutional and legal norms. —*PTI*

It was a night of glam as Emmy Awards lit up the Peacock Theatre in Los Angeles. HBO's 'The Pitt' shocked everyone by beating 'Severance' to win Best Drama, while 'The Studio' made history as the first comedy show to win 12 awards. First-time host Nate Bargatze brought laughs to a night packed with celebration. Here are a few winners:

BEST DRAMA SERIES: **'The Pitt'**

BEST ACTOR: **Noah Wyle, 'The Pitt'**

BEST ACTRESS: **Britt Lower, 'Severance'**

BEST DIRECTOR: **Adam Randall, 'Slow Horses'**

SUPPORTING ACTOR: **Owen Cooper, 'Adolescence'.**
The 15-year-old is the youngest ever to win an Emmy.

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Farmer loses eye in bear attack in Belagavi

BELAGAVI, 15 SEPT

A farmer in Belagavi district of the State lost his left eye following a bear attack while returning from his field in the Khanapur taluk on Sunday evening. Narayan Gavadi, a resident of Huland village in the Kanakumbi forest zone, sustained severe injuries, including damage to his cheek and stomach. He was initially treated at the Primary Health Centre in Khanapur before being transferred to BIMS hospital in Belagavi. Sunita Nimbaragi, the Khanapur range forest conservator, confirmed the incident, stating, "Gavadi was attacked while walking alone." In response, the local Congress block blamed the forest department for neglecting farmer safety and warned of upcoming protests if adequate forest watchers and guards are not deployed in areas frequently used by farmers —*Salar News*

Cage arrest: Forest dept, villagers book each other

MYSURU, 15 SEPT

Two separate FIRs have been registered by forest department officials and villagers against each other over locking foresters inside a tiger cage in Bommalapura village of Gundlupet taluk in Chamarajanagar district. Cases have been registered by Gundlupet police based on the complaints from both the parties. On 9 Sept, villagers, frustrated by the forest departments alleged lack of effort to capture a wild tiger that had been straying into their village for about a month, had locked several officials in the tiger cage. In their complaint on Monday, they filed a case against 15 forest department officials. The forest department also filed a case against villagers of Bommalapura —*Salar News*

Cauvery water supply disruption begins in City

BENGALURU, 15 SEPT

The supply of Cauvery water in the City will be disrupted for three days, from 15 to 17 September, due to emergency maintenance work across Greater Bengaluru. The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has urged residents to store adequate water in advance. BWSSB Chairman, V Ram Prasath Manohar, announced that various pumping stations involved in the Cauvery Water Supply Project will be shut down for scheduled maintenance. The Cauvery Stage V pumping stations will be closed for 60 hours from 1.00am on 15 September until 1.00pm on 17 September. Additionally, Cauvery Stages I, II, III, and IV will be out of operation for 24 hours from 6.00am on 16 September to 6.00am on 17 September —*ANI*

BJP to protest for labourers in M'luru on 16 Sept

MANGALURU, 15 SEPT

The BJP on Monday announced a protest in Mangaluru on 16 Sept against what it terms the "anti-people and anti-labour" policies of the Congress government in the State. BJP State Secretary and Dakshina Kannada MP Capt Brijesh Chowta, in a statement, said restrictions imposed on laterite stone and sand mining have resulted in acute shortages across Dakshina Kannada district. He said the crisis has stalled development projects and dashed the hopes of the poor who aspire to build homes. Chowta alleged that construction workers and contractors have been left without jobs, pushing thousands of families into hardship. The protest will be staged in front of the Mini Vidhana Soudha in Mangaluru from 9am to 5pm. —*PTI*

Govt backs ballot to fight vote theft on Democracy Day

DKS says ballot is stronger than bullet; CM flags conspiracy

BENGALURU, 15 SEPT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said on International Democracy Day that the constitutional guarantee of one-person one-vote was under threat, while his Deputy DK Shivakumar said that the ballot was stronger than a bullet.

"A conspiracy to weaken the Constitution is underway, and it must be ensured that this does not happen," Siddaramaiah said in Vidhana Soudha on Monday. "Efforts to steal votes, silence dissent, weaken institutions, centralise authority, and impose regressive ideologies are growing."

"Vote theft is not just electoral malpractice - it is the theft of dignity, equality, and citizenship itself," he said.

Siddaramaiah recalled Dr BR Ambedkar's principle that without social and economic equality, political equality is rendered meaningless.

"That's why our government pursues guarantees," he added.

While Siddaramaiah traced the roots to of democracy to Basavanna's Anubhava Mantapa and Buddha's teachings, Shivakuma brought up the Mahabaratha.

"Once Arjuna expresses his helplessness to Lord Krishna when he was being attacked by the enemies. To which, Krishna says that there would always be someone to protect you. Similarly, it is the voting right that will protect you in a democracy," he said.

"The ballot is stronger than bullet. The monarchy is sitting at home today and the elected representatives are governing. That is the power of the ballot," he added.

He said the 'My Vote My Right' campaign was designed to create awareness about democratic values and develop leadership skills.

MEKEDATU PROJECT

Separately, Siddaramaiah said he didn't understand Tamil Nadu's opposition to the Mekedatu project.

"The State was supposed to provide 98 TMC of water to Tamil Nadu," he said. "But up to now, 221 TMC of water has flowed to Tamil Nadu."

Noting that rains had been good for the past two years, he said that there won't be any power shortages this year. "There won't be any dispute between us and Tamil Nadu regarding water. Tamil Nadu and Centre should not create trouble for the Mekedatu project," he added. —*Salar News*

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at Vidhana Soudha on the occasion of International Democracy Day on Monday; Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar had earlier taken part in a bike rally from Sree Kanteerava Stadium to Vidhana Soudha to celebrate the occasion ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

The first cannon fire rehearsal for the Dasara elephants at the Exhibition Grounds in Mysuru on Monday ***PHOTO: SALAR***

'NO VIOLATION OF RIGHTS'

HC rejects pleas against Mushtaq's Dasara invite

BENGALURU, 15 SEPT

The Karnataka High Court on Monday dismissed the petitions challenging the State government's decision to invite International Booker Prize winner Banu Mushtaq to inaugurate the Mysuru Dasara festivities this year.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bhakru and Justice CM Joshi declined to entertain four public interest litigations (PIL), including the one filed by former Mysuru BJP MP Pratap Simha, stating that the petitioners had failed to demonstrate any constitutional or legal violation.

"We are not persuaded to accept that a person from a different faith inaugurating a function organised by the State would violate a legal or constitutional right of the petitioners or any values enshrined in the Constitution. The petitions stand dismissed," the bench said.

Advocate General K Shashikiran Shetty, representing the State government, emphasised that the Dasara inauguration is a State function – echoing Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's earlier assertions that the 'Nadda Habba' was a secular event.

However, Simha and other critics argue that her selection for the festival, which traditionally begins with Vedic rituals and floral offerings to Goddess Chamundeshwari, disrespects religious sentiments and long-standing traditions associated with the event.

Dasara celebration in Mysuru will begin from 22 Sept and culminate on Vijayadashami on 2 Oct. —*PTI*

CM is ambassador of conversion, blasts Ashoka

BENGALURU, 15 SEPT

Senior BJP leader R Ashoka called Chief Minister Siddaramaiah the "ambassador of religious conversion".

Reacting to the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes, which will be conducting the social and educational survey, popularly known as "caste census" from 22 September, listing at least 32 castes that contain dual identities like 'Kuruba Christian', 'Brahmin Christian', 'Vokkaliga Christian' and so on, the Opposition leader accused the Congress of "Muslim appeasement and injustice to Hindus".

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had said casteism in Hinduism had driven people to conversion on Saturday.

- Ashoka said when the BJP comes to power, they will suspend these "unconstitutional things"

"Siddaramaiah is creating a stage for religious conversion. Siddaramaiah is the ambassador of religious conversion. He is creating castes that no one had thought of in the past," Ashoka told press on Monday.

He said that when the BJP comes to power in the State, they will suspend all the "unconstitutional things" done by the Congress party.

"They will be in power for another two years, let them do whatever they want. If they continue this way by suppressing and doing injustice to Hindus and promoting religious conversion among Hindus, they won't even win 20 seats in the state. All of this will backfire for Congress," he added.

He asked why Siddaramaiah would only speak negatively about Hindus and not other religions. —*PTI*

Bidar stepmother pushes 7-yr-old to death, arrested

BIDAR, 13 SEPT

A 25-year-old woman, Radha, has been arrested in Bidar for allegedly pushing her seven-year-old stepdaughter, Sanvi, to death from a three-storey building on August 27. The child's father, Siddhant, initially reported it as an accident, but CCTV footage revealed Radha allegedly placed a chair and bucket, made Sanvi stand, and then pushed her. Sanvi's grandmother accused Radha of stepmotherly hatred. Sanvi's mother had died six years ago, and Siddhant married Radha in 2023; they have twin children. Gandhiganj Police booked Radha under Section 103 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. The investigation is ongoing.ars ago, after which Siddhant remarried Radha in 2023. The couple has twins together. —*Salar News*

INFRA WOES

Drainage water sits stagnant for several days on SJP Road near KR Market in Bengaluru, causing problem to commuters and residents ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

Hinduism did not give many people space of dignity: Priyank

KALABURAGI, 15 SEPT

Minister Priyank Kharge said Sikhism, Jainism, Buddhism and Lingayatism were all born in India as a separate religion, because Hindu religion did not give the "space of dignity" for certain sections in the society.

The minister was reacting to BJP's criticism of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's Saturday remarks, where he said that casteism in Hindu society had driven people to convert.

Kharge, hitting out at the BJP leaders said, "I don't think that (BJP State President BY) Vijayendra and (MLC CT) Ravi are aware of the history of religion in India. Sikhism, Jainism, Buddhism and Lingayatism were born (as a separate religion because) Hindu religion did not give the space for them." Speaking to reporters in Kalaburagi on Sunday, he asked, "What is the Chaturvarna system? Is it in any other religion? It is only in the Hindu religion. Babasaheb Ambedkar gave the slogan that being born as Hindu was not in my hands, but I will not die as a Hindu. Why? Because of the Varna system."

Minister Priyank Kharge group stage soccer match ***PHOTO: PTI***

- Priyank Kharge noted that BR Ambedkar had said that he was born a Hindu but would not die as one because of the Varna system

Minister Priyank Kharge ***PHOTO:***a

"People did not have dignity, various castes felt left out of the system. All religions that have been born in India, have been born against this inequality.

I don't think these people (BJP) leaders know what it is

Naseer Hussain lauds SC ruling on Waqf Act

BENGALURU, 15 SEPT

Congress MP Syed Naseer Hussain welcomed the Supreme Court's interim ruling on the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, saying that the apex court had safeguarded minority rights.

"From the beginning, I on behalf of the Congress Party had cautioned the government repeatedly against including the three clauses that have been stayed (on Monday)," he wrote on X. "I had pointed out that giving the Collector unbridled powers to entertain challenges, making someone prove they are a Muslim for five years (as a precondition to declaring their own property as Waqf), and skewing representation on the Waqf Board were wrong and Constitutionally unsustainable."

He said such a law would undermine the autonomy of the Waqf Board and would leave Waqf properties "vulnerable to constant challenge by mischievous elements."

Congress MP Syed Naseer Hussain ***PHOTO: PTI***

"Today's ruling vindicates our stand that any reform must be transparent, consultative, and faithful to the Constitution," he added. "The Congress remains committed to protecting the rights of minorities, upholding secular values, and ensuring that community institutions like the Waqf are managed with fairness, accountability, and respect for constitutional principles."

He added that the party would continue to challenge the Act in the top court. —*Salar News*

Floods and debt drive Bidar farmer to suicide

BIDAR, 15 SEPT

A farmer died by suicide in Khashempur(p) village in Bidar after bank staff continuously harassed her over loan repayment.

Gangamama, 55, had taken a loan of about Rs. 3 lakh from KGB Bank and PKPS to cultivate soya in her approximately 2 acres of land. However, due the incessant rainfall and waterlogging, the crops in the two acres land were damaged, putting her family under immense financial stress, pushing her to the tragic decision.

Her son, Rajkumar claimed in the complaint that the bank staff were harassing her.

The Mannalli Police visited the scene and registered a case under Section 194 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS). —*Salar News*

Help is available. Please call Tele Manas at 14416, SAHAI at 080-25497777 for support

DELIVERY GONE WRONG

Upendra and his wife's phones hacked

BENGALURU, 15 SEPT

Kannada actor-director Upendra Rao said his and wife Priyanka's phones were hacked and cautioned the public against responding to any messages from their phone numbers demanding money.

In a video message, the 56-year-old said that on Monday morning, his wife fell victim to cyber fraud after receiving a message from an unknown number regarding an online order. He said that he too fell for a similar scam.

"Please don't respond to any messages or calls from our phone numbers asking for money," he said.

Film stars Upendra Rao and and his wife Priyanka ***PHOTO: PTI***

Upendra explained how his phone their phones were hacked: "Priyanka received a phone call from an unknown number stating that she had placed an order for an item and to deliver it the person was searching for her address and asked her to send a message to -- star, followed by some number, star, another number and hashtag-- to get the delivery immediately. When she tried doing it from her number it did not happen, by that time her phone was already hacked. Priyanka then tried doing it from my phone, and my phone was also hacked."

The couple's phones were then used by the hackers to send messages to their contacts, requesting Rs 55,000, promising to pay it back within two hours. Upendra said that his several of their acquaintances had transferred around Rs 2 lakh.

After filing a police complaint, Priyanka, also an actor, said she followed the scammers instructions "in a hurry" and urged people not to send money. —*PTI*

CBI raids Nagendra's residence in Valmiki scam

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has conducted searches at the residence of former State minister B Nagendra and 15 other locations across Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh in connection with the Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation scam. Officials allege that Nagendra and his associates transferred government funds to personal accounts linked to his family.

The complaint originated from the deputy general manager of Union Bank of India, which maintains the Valmiki Corporation's account, claiming misappropriation of over Rs 84 crore between February and May 2024. Initially a bank fraud case against Nagendra, the investigation revealed that funds were allegedly transferred into accounts held by his sister and brother-in-law.

The CBI has identified multiple instances of diverted funds meant for the Scheduled Tribes Welfare Department, including Rs 2.17 crore allegedly channelled through firms connected to close associates of Nagendra —*PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Manjhi: Begging for HAM seats, not making claims

PATNA, 15 SEPT

Union minister Jitan Ram Manjhi on Monday made it clear that he was "begging and not making a claim" that his Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) be given a respectable number of seats by the NDA in the upcoming assembly polls. Manjhi made the remark in response to queries from journalists about a statement he had made in his Gaya Lok Sabha the previous day. When asked if he had a figure in mind when he spoke of a "respectable share", he said, "It could be anything. It could be 20 seats. It could also be 15." On Sunday, Manjhi had said he viewed the upcoming polls as a "do-or-die situation" for the HAM, which needed "eight MLAs" in the 243-strong state assembly or six per cent of the total votes in order to become a recognised party. *—PTI*

Mauritian PM concludes 4-day visit to U'khand

DEHRADUN, 15 SEPT

Mauritius Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam wound up his four-day visit to Uttarakhand on Monday with Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami meeting him at the Jolly Grant airport here. In a social media post after meeting Ramgoolam, the CMr said, "The visit by the Mauritian Prime Minister is bound to further deepen and strengthen the cultural ties between India and Mauritius." He also offered the Ramgoolam the 'prasad' of Chardham and gifted him products of Uttarakhand's umbrella brand 'House of Himalayas' as a souvenir. The Ramgoolam praised Uttarakhand's tradition of hospitality and thanked the Chief Minister. Accompanied by his wife Veena Ramgoolam, the Mauritian Prime Minister came to Uttarakhand on 12 September. *—PTI*

Jagan's absence may disqualify him from assembly

KANIPAKAM, 15 SEPT

Andhra Pradesh Assembly Deputy Speaker K Rahgurama Krishna Raju announced that YSRCP Chief YS Jagan Mohan Reddy may face disqualification from the Assembly if he remains absent for 60 consecutive days. Raju noted that Jagan, representing Pulivendula, has already missed 36 to 37 days. "If he doesn't attend (the Assembly) continuously for 60 days... he will be disqualified according to the Constitution," Raju stated. With the next Assembly session beginning on 18 September, lasting for around 10 days, Raju indicated that the matter could be brought before the House. Raju also mentioned that while Jagan aspires to be recognised as Leader of Opposition, "the rules are not in favour of it." *—PTI*

Maharashtra mandates Marathi in govt homepages

MUMBAI, 15 SEPT

The Maharashtra government has mandated that the opening pages of all departmental and ministry websites be in Marathi, as part of a new directive aimed at enhancing accessibility and consistency. An official explained, "This stand is due to the era of cyber frauds and misleading websites." The initiative requires a uniform format, including the '.gov.in' domain, with content also available in English. The Chief Minister's Office insists on standard parameters across departments to enable fair performance assessment. As part of this effort, the top-performing ministries will be recognised in an event led by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on 2 October, with third-party agencies tasked to assess departmental performances. *—PTI*

Sisters, moms in danger as Oppn backs infiltration: PM

PM says vote-bank politics behind Cong, RJD defending infiltrators

PURNEA, 15 SEPT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday accused the Opposition of shielding illegal immigrants, claiming it has led to a "demographic crisis" in eastern states like Bihar, Assam, and West Bengal. Addressing a rally in Purnea after launching development projects worth ₹40,000 crore, Modi said the infiltration has left people "worried for the honour of their sisters and daughters."

Modi claimed that vote-bank politics was behind the Congress and RJD defending infiltrators, referencing the recent Voter Adhikar Yatra by the Congress.

He said the NDA was committed to driving out every infiltrator, adding: "It is Modi's guarantee. The law of the land, not the whims of infiltrators, will prevail in Bharat."

While Opposition parties have criticised the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls for allegedly targeting minorities, the PM framed the backlash as support for illegal migrants. He has yet to respond to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's allegations of voter suppression in Bengaluru's Mahadevapura.

Bihar Guv Arif Mohammed Khan, MP Pappu Yadav, PM Narendra Modi, State BJP President Dilip Jaiswal and CM Nitish Kumar during the inauguration ceremony of various projects, in Purnea, Bihar **PHOTO: PTI**

Modi also criticised the Congress over a deleted tweet by its Kerala unit, which linked 'bidis' and 'Bihar'. He called it an insult to Biharis, asserting that voters will respond in kind.

He further attacked the past Congress and RJD governments, claiming they looted public funds. Quoting a famous line by late PM Rajiv Gandhi, Modi said, "85 paise of every rupee were eaten up by the hand in the glow of the lantern", referencing the Congress and RJD poll symbols.

Modi also highlighted new GST rate cuts effective 22 September, calling them a festive gift to middle and lower-income families.

He praised NDA welfare measures, such as free rations and Ayushman Bharat, and announced a Makhana Board to promote local farming, a veiled jibe at Rahul Gandhi, who had recently visited makhana cultivators in Katihar. *—Salar News*

Cong: BJP gifted Adani 1,050 acres in Bihar

The Congress party accused the Modi government of allocating 1,050 acres of land in Bhagalpur, Bihar, to the Adani Group for a power plant as a "gift" amid signs of impending electoral defeat. Pawan Khera, head of the Congress' media and publicity department, stated that "whenever the BJP feels that it will lose an election, 'gifts' are given to businessman Gautam Adani." He alleged that the land was given for only 1 rupee per year for 33 years, while locals faced intimidation to sign agreements. Khera condemned the contrasting electricity pricing for Bihar residents, claiming it amounts to "double loot," as electricity generated from the plant will be sold at rates significantly higher than for other states. *—PTI*

FINAL ARGUMENTS ON 7 OCT

Will halt Bihar SIR if illegal; can't stop SIR across India: SC

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

The Supreme Court on Monday warned that the entire special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls would be set aside in case any illegality is found. The court clarified it can't stop the poll panel from conducting a similar exercise across country.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi, which fixed 7 October for hearing final arguments on the validity of Bihar SIR, refused to offer any "piecemeal opinion".

The bench, however, allowed petitioners to also argue on pan-India SIR on 7 October.

It clarified that the publication of the final electoral roll on 30 September will not make any difference to the adjudication of the case.

Senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, appearing for the Election Commission (EC), requested the bench to defer the hearing till the final assessment of SIR is made.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for Rastriya Janta Dal, said, "Their (EC's) rules require that within one day objections be uploaded on their website, so that people can see who has applied for deletion, etc. This is not being followed. They have uploaded only 30 per cent of the objections and requests."

- The Bihar SIR - first since 2003 - sparked a political row, with the Opposition alleging that it aims to deprive people of their right to vote.

Advocate Ashwini Upadhyay added that Aadhaar can be given to foreigners based on a recommendation letter of a village head, local MLA or MP.

The Bihar SIR - first since 2003 - sparked a political row, with the Opposition alleging that it aims to deprive people of their right to vote.

The EC maintains that it is to clean the voter list by deleting the deceased, duplicate voter card holders and illegal immigrants. SIR reduced the Bihar's registered voters from 7.9 crore to 7.24 crore. *—PTI*

Raut claims ₹1.5L cr gambling in India-Pak match

MUMBAI, 15 SEPT

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader **Sanjay Raut** on Monday claimed gambling to the tune of Rs 1.5 lakh crore took place on the India-Pakistan Asia Cup cricket match played a day earlier, of which Rs 25,000 crore went to Pakistan.

Talking to reporters, the Rajya Sabha MP said the Pakistan Cricket Board got Rs 1,000 crore from the India-Pakistan match, adding that "this money will be used against us".

"Gambling of 1.5 lakh crore took place in yesterday's match of which Rs 25,000 crore went to Pakistan. This money will be used against us. Doesn't the government or the BCCI know it?" Raut claimed.

A seven-wicket win for India ended on a hard-edged note as their players refused the customary handshake with their counterparts from Pakistan after a collective decision endorsed by an important member of the support staff and okayed by the BCCI.

Raut, dubbed it as a farce and claimed the refusal was not a spur-of-the-moment call.

The match was played despite calls for a boycott amid heightened geopolitical tensions between the two nations following the Pahalgam terror attack on 22 April and 'Operation Sindoor' by India on terrorist bases across border on 7 May. *—PTI*

RAGA VISITS FLOODED AMRITSAR

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday visited the flood-hit areas of Amritsar and interacted with those affected by the calamity. After his arrival, he headed to Ghonewal village in Amritsar's Ajnala and met the flood-hit people to enquire about the damage. Ghonewal village was among several areas in Ajnala which was badly hit by floodwaters **PHOTO: PTI**

Sasikala, others call for AIADMK merger for 2026 poll

CHENNAI, 15 SEPT

AIADMK faction leaders raised the pitch for a merger on former chief minister CN Annadurai's birth anniversary on Monday. Its General Secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami is likely to meet Home Minister Amit Shah in Delhi on Tuesday.

Ousted former AIADMK interim general secretary **VK Sasikala** appealed for a unification of AIADMK factions before next year's Assembly election.

The former close aide of late chief minister J Jayalalithaa told reporters at her Poes Garden residence here that AIADMK's goal was to end the DMK rule and re-establish the rule of "Amma" (Jayalalithaa).

AIADMK senior leader KA Sengottaiyan reiterated this as his 10-day deadline for Party General Secretary Palaniswami to re-induct ousted leaders ended on Monday. "Today I am reminded of Anna's golden saying: 'Let us forget and forgive.' That is the way we should act."

Meanwhile, Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam General Secretary TTV Dhinakaran, who was also expelled from AIADMK, ruled out the scope of accepting Palaniswami as the chief ministerial candidate for 2026. Dhinakaran recently parted ways with BJP over Palaniswami being the CM face.

BJP State Chief Nainar Nagendran had expressed his willingness to negotiate with former chief minister O Panneerselvam and Dhinakaran and bring them back to NDA.

Panneerselvam, another AIADMK leader expelled, after he and Palaniswami ousted Sasikala and her nephew Dhinakaran, said party cadres want AIADMK to unite. Asked if he would return to NDA, he replied, "There are no permanent enemies or friends in politics. Anything can happen." *—PTI*

Tariffs hit Andhra's shrimp exports causing loss of ₹25,000 cr: Naidu

AMARAVATI, 15 SEPT

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has expressed concern over the impact of American tariffs on the state's shrimp exports, saying it has caused a loss of Rs 25,000 crore to the sector and led to the cancellation of up to 50 per cent export orders.

In separate letters addressed to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and Fisheries Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh, the Chief Minister highlighted the difficulties being faced by the

southern state's aquaculture sector and requested their support.

CM said, taxes to the tune of up to Rs 600 crore have been levied on exports happening through 2,000 containers.

Emphasising that Andhra accounts for 80 per cent of the country's shrimp exports and 34 per cent of marine exports, valued at around Rs 21,246 crore annually, he highlighted that 2.5 lakh families and 30 lakh more from allied sectors rely on the aquaculture sector.

Further, he called for setting up a Rs 100 crore corpus fund, establishment of cold storages and hygienic fish and seafood markets while underlining that government is ready to set up Andhra Pradesh Shrimp Producers Coordination Committee to facilitate direct farmer-to-market supply chains. At present, per capita seafood consumption in India is only 12-13kg per year, he added. *—PTI*

OBC, SC AND ST GROUPS OPPOSE MARATHA QUOTA GR

MUMBAI, 15 SEPT

The political landscape in Maharashtra is becoming increasingly charged as OBC, SC, and ST groups voice concerns over a recent Government Resolution (GR) on Maratha quota, prompting Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to warn against "politics of extreme." The GR, issued earlier this month to address protests led by activist Manoj Jarange, has ignited disputes between Maratha and OBC communities. Various caste groups are protesting, asserting that granting Marathas OBC status would jeopardise the rights of existing OBC communities. OBC activists are preparing for a major rally in Nagpur on 10 October. Adivasi groups have opposed the Banjara community's demands for ST reservation, highlighting existing benefits. Fadnavis reiterated that the Maratha quota GR would not undermine OBC rights, affirming that only individuals with Kunbi records would receive certificates. *—PTI*

'NOT ARBITRARY'

SC backs Centre's decision to scrap 'Waqf by User'

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

The Supreme Court on Monday upheld the Centre's decision to delete the "Waqf by user" clause from the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, calling the move prima facie not arbitrary and aimed at curbing misuse of public land.

"Waqf by user" allowed properties to be declared as Waqf based on long-term religious or charitable use, even without a formal deed. This provision, now abolished prospectively, had become a major point of contention in the legal challenge to the amended law.

A bench of Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih said that the Centre acted within its legislative powers after observing misuse, including instances where thousands of acres of government land were wrongly notified as Waqf, such as in Andhra Pradesh.

"If the legislature takes steps to stop such a menace, the amendment cannot prima facie be called arbitrary," the court noted, clarifying that the deletion applies only from the date the amended Act came into force and does not affect previously registered Waqfs.

The court dismissed concerns that the change would lead to government grabbing Waqf lands, calling such fears "baseless".

The new law mandates formal registration of all Waqfs with valid deeds, reinforcing earlier requirements. The court also rejected challenges from mutawallis (Waqf managers), stating they had ample time over the past 30 years to comply.

The Centre had cited a 116 per cent rise in Waqf land since 2013, flagging it as evidence of misuse.

It claimed the Waqf area jumped from 18.29 lakh acres (pre-2013) to over 20.92 lakh acres post-amendment, calling the increase "really shocking". *—PTI*

The new law mandates formal registration of all Waqfs with valid deeds, reinforcing earlier requirements **PHOTO: PTI**

WAQF AMENDMENT LAW ROW

From the inception of law till the top court's latest decision, here's a chronology of events:

3 APRIL: Lok Sabha passes Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

4 APRIL: Rajya Sabha passes Bill.

5 APRIL: President Droupadi Murmu grants assent to Bill.

AAP leader Amanatullah Khan, Asaduddin Owaisi, Mohammad Jawed, AIMPLB move SC against Bill.

17 APRIL: SC directs Centre to file its stand.

29 APRIL: SC refuses to entertain fresh pleas against law.

5 MAY: Then CJI Sanjiv Khanna says case will be taken up by his successor Justice BR Gavai.

15 MAY: CJI Gavai fixes pleas for hearing on 20 May.

20–22 MAY: SC hears pleas and reserves order.

15 Sept: CJI Gavai led bench passes interim order.

The (SC) Order is an important one because it goes a long way towards undoing the mischievous intentions underlying the original statute

-Jairam Ramesh, Congress General Secretary in-charge Communications

Today's order strengthens the hope and trust that people place in the Hon'ble Supreme Court to safeguard the religious rights of the Muslim minority community and to uphold the Constitution

-MK Stalin, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister

Monorail snag halts Mumbai train; 17 rescued

MUMBAI, 15 SEPT

A monorail train halted abruptly due to a technical snag between Antop Hill Bus Depot and GTBN station in Wadala at 7.16 am on Monday. All 17 passengers were safely evacuated by 7.40 am after being transferred to another train, said the Maha Mumbai Metro Operation Corporation Limited (MMMOCL). Services between Sant Gadge Maharaj Chowk and Wadala ran on a single line with delays, while Wadala to Chembur services continued as usual. Fire engines were sent but not deployed. This marks the second incident in a month. On 19 August, 782 passengers were rescued in two separate monorail snags. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Karan moves HC to protect his personality rights

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

Filmmaker and producer Karan Johar on Monday approached Delhi High Court, seeking protection of his personality and publicity rights. Besides protection of his personality and publicity rights, Johar has also urged the court to pass an order directing certain websites and platforms not to illegally sell merchandise, including mugs and t-shirts, bearing his name and image. "I have a right to ensure that no one unauthorisedly uses my persona, face or voice," senior advocate Rajshekhar Rao, appearing for Johar, said. The right to publicity, popularly known as personality rights, is the right to protect, control and profit from one's image, name or likeness. *—PTI*

Ex-TMC MP quizzed by ED in betting app case

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

Former Trinamool Congress MP and actor Mimi Chakraborty appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday in connection with a money-laundering probe linked to the illegal betting app 1xBet. Her statement is being recorded under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), with the agency examining her alleged links through endorsements and financial transactions. The ED is investigating several celebrities over connections to the app, which has reportedly duped users of crores and evaded significant taxes. Former cricketers Suresh Raina and Shikhar Dhawan were questioned earlier, while actor Urvashi Rautela, the app's Indian ambassador, and Bengali actor Ankush Hazra have been summoned for Tuesday. The Indian online betting market is estimated at over USD 100 billion, with about 22 crore users, half of them regular. *—PTI*

Farms submerged as floods hit Manipur again

IMPHAL, 15 SEPT

Torrential rains triggered widespread flooding in parts of Manipur and Maharashtra, prompting emergency evacuations and damaging key infrastructure. In Manipur, two major rivers breached embankments in the Imphal valley late Sunday night. The Iril river overflowed at Kshetrigao, flooding vast stretches of farmland, homes, and roads in Imphal East. The Wangjing river also rose above danger levels, submerging Sangaiyumpham and Wangjing areas in Thoubal district. A relief camp at Wangjing Kodompokpi Sports Complex was waterlogged, while an iron bridge at Yairipok over Thoubal river was swept away, severing access between Imphal East and Thoubal districts. Over 100 residents were rescued. Even home of state Congress president was inundated. *—PTI*

SC picked SIT gives Vantara clean chit

Citing example of Myrusu Dasara, court calls acquisition of 1.5 lakh animals lawful

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

The Supreme Court-appointed Special Investigation Team (SIT) has given a clean chit to Vantara, a zoological rescue and rehabilitation centre run by the Reliance Foundation in Jamnagar, Gujarat. The apex court took the SIT's report on record and said it found no foul play in the acquisition or management of animals at the facility.

A bench of Justices Pankaj Mithal and PB Varale noted that Vantara's operations are prima facie within the regulatory framework. The bench said that they did not deliberately read the report submitted by the SIT as they wanted to go through it during the hearing.

The court accepted its report, stating it would not entertain further objections. The bench also said authorities are free to act on the report's recommendations.

"We should be proud of such efforts. If the acquisition of an elephant is in accordance with law, what is the issue.? You maintain your elephants in the temple and use is for procession, use for Dasara. In Mysuru, you do it?"

The SIT, led by former Supreme Court judge Justice J Chelameswar, was formed on 25 August following PILs citing alleged legal violations and unregulated acquisition of animals, especially elephants. However, the report found full compliance with all laws.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and Senior Advocate Harish Salve, representing Vantara, opposed publishing the report citing commercial confidentiality and global media scrutiny. Salve argued that revealing sensitive operational details could fuel further speculation and harm the facility's reputation.

The facility, which is not open to the public, aims to provide lifelong care for rescued animals and generate carbon credits through forestation.

The sanctuary has imported around 39,000 animals from 32 countries, including those known for trafficking, raising concerns about the legitimacy of sources and potential violations of international and Indian wildlife laws

In March 2025, a coalition of 30 South African animal rights groups, under the Wildlife Animal Protection Forum of South Africa (WAPFSA), urged their government to investigate the export of wild animals to Vantara. A joint investigation by Süddeutsche Zeitung and Armando Info raised concerns over the origins of animals imported from countries including the UAE, Venezuela, Malaysia, and Indonesia. *—PTI*

A foreign investigation raised concerns over the origins of animals imported for Anant Ambani's Vantara PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

ABOUT VANTARA

3,500-acres
In Jamnagar dist, Gujarat

WHAT ANIMALS DOES IT HOUSE?

- 1.5 lakh animals of 2,000 species including:
  - 200 lions.
  - 250 leopards.
  - 900 crocodiles.
- In May 2024, 1,825 animals, including jaguars, tapirs, crocodiles, and various monkey species were brought from Venezuela.

200 booked for protest against post on Quran in UP

SHAHJAHANPUR, 15 SEPT

Police have registered a case against 200 unidentified individuals following violent protests on Friday night over derogatory social media posts targeting Prophet Muhammad and the Quran.

The unrest began after the arrest of a 45-year-old man for allegedly posting objectionable content. A large crowd gathered at the police station around 9 pm and set two two-wheelers ablaze. Police said the protesters refused to disperse even after being informed that the accused had been apprehended.

Shahjahanpur Super intendent of Police Rajesh Dwivedi stated that police were forced to use baton-charge to control the situation. Protesters later blocked the Lal Imli crossing, which was cleared after extensive persuasion.

On Saturday, police arrested a woman for allegedly posting indecent remarks about Hindu deities on Facebook. Others were booked for sharing those.

A case was officially registered on Monday at Sadar police outpost, based on a complaint by outpost in-charge Shivam Agarwal. The SP confirmed that a team is analysing CCTV footage, police videos, and viral clips to identify the 200 protesters involved.

Heavy police deployment and flag marches are ongoing across the city to maintain calm. The SP assured the situation is now under control.

Police have urged the public to refrain from making provocative or derogatory remarks on social media that could harm communal harmony. A social media monitoring team has already identified individuals who posted or forwarded offensive content. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Driver of BMW arrested for killing FinMin official

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

The woman allegedly behind the wheel of the BMW that fatally hit a senior Finance Ministry official on Sunday has been arrested, Delhi Police confirmed on Monday.

Gagandeep Kaur, 38, a Gurugram resident and wife of businessman Parikshit Makkar, was taken into custody after being discharged from a hospital. She has been booked under multiple sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, including culpable homicide, rash driving, and evidence tampering.

Deputy Secretary Navjot Singh, 52, from the Department of Economic Affairs, was killed in the crash near Delhi Cantonment Metro station while returning from Bangla Sahib Gurdwara with his wife, Sandeep Kaur. She sustained serious injuries.

According to the FIR, Sandeep pleaded with the accused to take them to a nearby hospital. Instead, they were taken 19 km away to a small hospital in GTB Nagar. Police sources say the hospital is allegedly co-owned by Gagandeep's father, raising suspicions of a cover-up.

Van driver Mohammad Gulfam, who transported all four injured individuals, told police he was instructed by the couple to head to the GTB Nagar hospital. He is being treated as a key witness.

Singh's family has accused the hospital of negligence, alleging that while the BMW driver's husband was quickly admitted for minor injuries, Kaur was left in the lobby despite serious trauma. *—PTI*

Wreckage of the BMW car lies on a road after the accident in New Delhi in which senior official of finance ministry Navjot Singh, who was on a motorcycle, was killed; The accused Gagandeep Kaur PHOTO: PTI

5 B'deshis students to be deported from Assam

SILCHAR, 15 SEPT

Five Bangladeshi students at the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Silchar have been suspended for two semesters and will be deported for their alleged involvement in violent campus clashes and possession of narcotics, officials said on Monday.

The third-year students, enrolled under the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) scholarship programme, reportedly attacked fellow Bangladeshi students on 8 September. NIT Director Dilip Kumar Baidya said, "We have sufficient evidence to confirm their involvement. They have been suspended for an academic year and expelled from the hostel."

Dean of Students' Welfare, SS Dhar, confirmed that narcotics were recovered from the students' rooms. "The disciplinary action is primarily for violence, but drug use was also a factor," he added.

Eyewitnesses alleged the students, reportedly under the influence, used rods, knives and screwdrivers to assault, including final-year students. The attack left several injured, with two sustaining serious head injuries and admitted to the ICU at Silchar Medical College and Hospital. *—PTI*

NAVY GETS ANTI-SUBMARINE SHIP

Navy has received 'Androth', an indigenously-built anti-submarine warfare shallow water craft (ASW-SWC), enhancing its coastal defence amid rising Chinese activity in the Indian Ocean. 'Androth' is the second of eight planned ASW-SWC vessels. Equipped with advanced torpedoes and ASW rockets, the 77m ship features over 80 per cent indigenous content PHOTO: PTI

Police lathicharge protesting job aspirants in Patna

PATNA, 15 SEPT

Job aspirants in Bihar held a protest here on Monday to press their demand for the announcement of a date for the constable recruitment test in the state. They breached security barricades, prompting cops to baton charge them.

Protesters gathered near Dak Bunglow crossing in Patna and were demanding the announcement of the total vacancies and the exam date for the Bihar Police.

Patna SSP Kartikeya K Sharma told PTI, "Protesters gathered in large numbers and disrupted vehicular movement. They also breached the police barricades and reached Kotwali Police station, a restricted area." The job aspirants claimed that several protesters were injured in the baton charge. *—PTI*

JU student's death: Parents allege foul play

KOLKATA, 15 SEPT

The parents of Jadavpur University student Anamika Mandal, who was found unconscious in a campus pond on 11 September and later declared dead, have alleged foul play and decided to file a formal police complaint. They met Kolkata Police Commissioner Manoj Verma on Monday, seeking a thorough investigation.

Anamika, a 21-year-old third-year English Honours student, did not know how to swim. Her father, Arnab Mandal, questioned why she would be near the waterbody alone at 10 pm. He also raised concerns over missing personal items and inconsistent accounts. "Her glasses were never recovered. A professor returned her mobile phone and hair clip but couldn't name who handed them in," he said.

He further alleged that Anamika may have been pushed into the pond or forced to consume alcohol. Police have questioned seven of Anamika's friends so far. Among them is a couple who spotted her in the pond and helped take her to hospital. The post-mortem has cited drowning as the primary cause of death.

The National Commission for Women has taken suo motu cognisance and written to the Kolkata Police Commissioner demanding a detailed action-taken report within three days. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Odisha teacher beats kids for not touching her feet

BARIPADA, 15 SEPT

The Odisha Education Department has suspended a woman teacher for corporal punishment at a government upper primary school in Mayurbhanj district, officials said on Monday.

Assistant teacher Sukanti Kar allegedly beat 31 students from classes 6 to 8 with a bamboo stick after they failed to touch her feet following the morning prayer at Khandadeula school, under Baisinga police station. The students usually show respect by touching teachers' feet immediately after prayers, but Kar arrived late on Thursday.

Several students suffered injuries, including one boy who fractured his hand and a girl who lost consciousness and was hospitalised, according to the school management committee's inquiry.

PHOTO: AI

Following an investigation by the headmaster, Block Education Officer Biplab Kar, and others, the teacher was found guilty and suspended on Saturday.

Corporal punishment has been banned in Odisha's educational institutions since September 2004. The government has taken strict action, treating the matter with utmost seriousness. *—PTI*

'SHE WAS LIKE OUR MOM'

Muslims performs last rites of Hindu woman

JAIPUR, 15 SEPT

In a heartwarming display of communal harmony, the last rites of a 67-year-old Hindu woman, who was living alone, were performed by a Muslim youth in Rajasthan's Bhilwara.

Shanti Devi, a resident of Jangi Chowk in Gandhi Nagar area of Bhilwara, had been unwell for some time and was undergoing treatment at the Mahatma Gandhi Hospital where she died on Sunday.

She had been living alone since 2018 after the death of her three daughters and a son.

With no one from her family present to shoulder the responsibility, 30-year-old Asgar Ali Khan, who grew up seeing Shanti Devi as a mother figure, came forward.

"She would love me like a mother since my childhood. She would ask me every day if I had eaten or how I was feeling. After she passed away, I felt like I had lost my mother again," he said with teary eyes.

"My parents passed away long ago, and Shanti Devi filled that void. Even during Covid, when she was unwell, I took care of her," Khan said

Supported by his neighbours and friends — Ashfaq Qureshi, Abid Qureshi, Shakir Pathan, Firoz Qureshi, Inayat and Zabid — Khan arranged for the funeral, carried the bier on the shoulders, and performed the cremation according to Hindu rituals.

Local Muslim women also broke down during the final procession, grieving for the woman they had seen as part of their colony.

Relatives of Shanti Devi arrived later from Madhya Pradesh and joined the final journey.

Khan said Shati Devi's ashes would be immersed at Triveni Sangam in Prayagraj or Matrikundia in Chittorgarh district, in keeping with her wishes. *—PTI*

PHOTO: AI

Muslims welcome SC stay on key clauses of Waqf law

Prominent Muslim bodies on Monday welcomed the Supreme Court judgement putting on hold several key provisions of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, saying they are hopeful of getting "complete justice" in the matter, which sparked nationwide protests and debates earlier this year, once the final judgement is out.

Both the All-India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) and the All-India Shia Personal Law Board (AISPLB) termed the order a welcome step, even as the former said it expected the top court to stay the entire law, and not just certain key provisions.

Speaking to PTI, Khalid Rashid Farangi Mahali, an executive member of AIMPLB, said, "Muslims and the AIMPLB wanted a stay on the entire Waqf (Amendment) Act, which the Supreme Court refused. The court said the stay cannot be imposed on the entire Waqf law, but it put on hold certain provisions, which is a welcome step. We have got significant relief and hope to get complete relief when the final judgement comes."

He added that the apex court has also directed that efforts should be made to appoint the CEO, who is also the ex-officio secretary of the Waqf board, from the Muslim community, which is a relief.

"This has given significant relief. However, the issue of non-Muslim members (in the board) is still there. The Constitution gives freedom of religion to all Indians, and Waqf is an integral part of Islam," Mahali said.

He added that the trusts and religious endowments of other religions and communities have a provision that only a person from the same faith and the same school of thought could become its member, but the Waqf (Amendment) Act ended this provision, and allowed a non-Muslim to become a member of the board.

"The Supreme Court has not stayed this. This is a big issue for which we have to wait," Mahali said.

The Supreme Court on Monday put on hold several key provisions of the Waqf law, including the clause that only those practising Islam for the last five years can dedicate a property as Waqf, but refused to stay the entire law.

PHOTO: FREEPIK/AI

The bench of Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justice Augustine George also pressed pause on the powers given to a collector to adjudicate the status of Waqf properties and ruled on the contentious issue of non-Muslim participation in Waqf boards, directing that the Central Waqf Council should not have more than four non-Muslim members out of 20, and State Waqf boards not have more than three of 11.

The general secretary of AISPLB, Yasoob Abbas, told PTI, "We honour the judgement given by the Supreme Court. The way in which the Joint Parliamentary Committee toured India, got the Bill passed by Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha overnight, and also got the approval of the president, we had no other option but to move the Supreme Court. We have full faith in our courts, and we are hopeful of getting justice."

"On the presence of non-Muslims in the Central Waqf Council and state Waqf boards as members, we request the honourable court to reconsider it," Abbas added.

Uttar Pradesh Minister of State for Minority Welfare, Muslim Waqf and Hajj, Danish Azad Ansari, told PTI, "We welcome the Supreme Court judgement. The Modi government is honestly and seriously working for the upliftment and development of the minority Muslims and the Pasmandas. In the light of the Supreme Court judgement, our government will do everything needed for the Muslims."

He also said the Waqf (Amendment) Act will open new avenues of development for the Muslims.

When cont acted, former Uttar Pradesh minister Mohsin Raza told PTI, "We welcome the Supreme Court judgement. The petitioners never wanted the (Waqf) law to be implemented. This is a defeat for them. As far as the issue of three members of the Waq board being non-Muslims is concerned, the board is a constitutional body."

Raza added that the top has considered the laws enacted by the Modi government, be the anti-triple talaq law, Waqf law, or the abrogation of Article 370, to be correct.

"This will pave the way for the upliftment of the Muslim society, and those with whom the Waqf boards did injustice, will get justice now. Those who used to loot in the name of Waqf will now have hard times. The petitioners were siding with them," Raza claimed.

Samajwadi Party MLA from Sambhal, Iqbal Mahmood, told reporters, "I have not read the Supreme Court judgement completely yet. From what I have heard on news channels, I can say that Muslims have always followed the orders of the top court.

"However, a few things are beyond our understanding, such as the presence of non-Muslim members in the Waqf boards. Can we make any Muslim a member of the Ram Temple Trust?"

Bareilly-based cleric Maulana Shahabuddin Razvi termed the apex court judgement "very good" and "balanced".

"The judgement has kindled hope that illegal occupation of Waqf land will be removed, and schools, colleges, hospitals, mosques, madrasas and orphanages will be built on those lands," Razvi told PTI Videos.

Rehan Akhtar Ansari, a faculty member in the department of theology at the Aligarh Muslim University, said the judgement has addressed most of the critical issues, which were a source of concern for the Muslim community. —*PTI*

BLAZE RIPS THROUGH HAPPYLAND

A massive blaze tore through tightly packed shanty homes in Happyland, Tondo, Phillipines, displacing over 1,100 families. The fire started on the second floor of a two-storey and quickly spread in Manila's most densely populated slum. No fatalities were reported, according to the Bureau of Fire Protection, which is still investigating the cause of the fire ***PHOTO: PTI***

SALAR ساڈا

By 2050, gas to outpace coal & oil in India

By 2050, natural gas will be the only fossil fuel to see an increase in the energy mix of the United States, China, and India, even as coal and oil decline globally, according to a sector update by Nuvama Institutional Equities, citing S&P Global Commodity Insights.

'By 2050, gas shall be the only fossil fuel with a potential increase in the energy mix for the US, China, and India," noted the report

The report noted that despite the sharp rise in renewable energy capacity worldwide, fossil fuels will continue to dominate the energy basket in major economies. Renewables are expected to rise from 4 per cent currently to around 20 per cent by 2050, while fossil fuels will still account for more than 50 per cent.

"India's energy mix in 2024 is dominated by fossil fuels (77 per cent) with renewables at just 2 per cent; by 2050 though, fossil fuels are projected to drop to 66 per cent and renewables to rise to 16 per cent." noted the report

However, the report underlined that gas will emerge as a "transition fuel", offering flexibility and cleaner alternatives to coal.

"In the US, Europe and Southeast Asia, coal-to-gas substitution has been a favourable transition, while India has lagged in leveraging gas in the power sector." highlighted the report.

The study also flagged that scalability and commercial challenges limit a direct coal-to-renewable shift, making natural gas a critical bridge in the path to net zero.

The report noted fossil fuels will continue to dominate the energy basket in major economies ***PHOTO: PTI***

The report, however, highlighted that many government initiatives like targeted LPG subsidies and PAHAL are helping in the transition towards gas for cooking.

"The category of 'other energy sources', essentially traditional biomass (cooking), is declining sharply--being replaced by LPG. Government schemes such as 'PAHAL' and targeted LPG subsidies have driven this shift, leading to a reduction from 38 per cent to 19 per cent with expected further decline," highlighted the report

India's structural ambitions, such as the National Hydrogen Mission and recent GST reductions to support renewable adoption, signal intent. Yet, without systemic flexibility, gas market reforms, and scaled-up storage capacity, the likelihood of falling short of emission reduction targets remains high.

The report noted that gas, as the cleanest fossil fuel, could play a balancing role if supported through tax and pricing reforms. Without such measures, India risks missing both its near-term and long-term climate ambitions, even as it pursues the 2070 net-zero target. —*ANI*

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

King Charles will deploy tiara diplomacy as UK tries to woo Trump

Preparations are in full swing at Windsor Castle as King Charles III gets ready to host U.S. President Donald Trump for an unprecedented second state visit this week. Grooms are polishing the hooves of royal carriage horses, military guards are rehearsing precision drills, and a 50-metre-long mahogany table is being set for a grand banquet, all part of a meticulously choreographed display of royal pomp designed to impress and influence.

The visit, expected to begin in earnest on Wednesday, will see Trump and First Lady Melania Trump welcomed with full ceremonial honours. From brass bands to glittering tiaras and a dinner served on 200-year-old silver, Britain will showcase the grandeur of its monarchy in a display that has a clear diplomatic purpose: to strengthen ties with one of the world's most powerful, and unpredictable, leaders.

A SECOND STATE VISIT: A ROYAL FIRST

This marks the first time any US president has been offered a second state visit by the UK, and the first instance where a royal invitation was personally delivered by the King, via Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who met Trump in Washington just five weeks into his second term.

"It's a great, great honour," Trump said, proudly displaying the King's handwritten invitation. "And that says at Windsor. That's really something."

SOFT POWER IN ACTION

State visits are the monarchy's most potent tool of soft power. Though modern British monarchs hold no political authority, they remain powerful symbols of national identity and diplomacy. The government often uses the royal family to foster goodwill, reward allies, and smooth over diplomatic tensions.

"We're buttering up to him," said royal historian Robert Lacey. "He wouldn't come to Britain without the royal pageantry, the castle, the queen he admired, and now the king."

During her seven-decade reign, Queen Elizabeth II hosted everyone from Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceauescu to South African President Nelson Mandela. The royal family has welcomed the last four U.S. presidents, though not all visits were full state affairs.

STRATEGIC CHARM OFFENSIVE

This time, the stakes are particularly high. With global security fraying and Russia's war in Ukraine escalating, the UK is seeking continued American support. On the trade front, it also wants to renegotiate favourable terms post-Brexit, especially under a Trump administration known for its "America First" stance.

"A new Trump presidency, a new prime minister, but the same sense of urgency," said Dr Martin Farr, a British history expert at Newcastle University. "The monarchy remains our most powerful lever with this president, who genuinely admires it, particularly given his mother's Scottish roots."

This marks the first time any US President has been offered a second state visit by the UK, and the first instance where a royal invitation was personally delivered by the King ***PHOTO: PTI***

POMP CIRCUMSTANCE

The real spectacle begins Wednesday. Following their arrival late Tuesday, the Trumps will be greeted at Windsor Castle by King Charles and Queen Camilla. A ceremonial carriage procession will carry the royal couple and their guests through the castle grounds, past lines of uniformed troops.

Inside the 1,000-year-old fortress, a military band will play both national anthems before Charles and Trump inspect the honour guard, resplendent in scarlet tunics and bearskin hats. Hundreds of military personnel, including mounted troops and musicians, will participate in the formalities after months of rehearsals.

When rifles are shouldered, it will happen with a crisp "thwack." When boots hit the stone, they'll do so in perfect synchrony. "God Save the King" and "The Star-Spangled Banner" will ring out flawlessly.

HISTORY ON DISPLAY

After the formal welcome, the Trumps will be shown an exhibit curated to highlight the shared legal and democratic traditions of Britain and the US, which stretch back to Magna Carta , signed in 1215 just miles from Windsor.

Though specific artefacts remain under wraps, the gesture is designed to remind both nations of their historical alignment and mutual values.

A BANQUET FOR KINGS

The centrepiece of the visit will be Wednesday night's state banquet. The opulent affair will take place in St George's Hall, where men will wear white tie and tails and women will dazzle in gowns and tiaras. Royal historian Hugo Vickers promises, "The tiaras will be out in force. It will all look very splendid."

Guests, up to 160 in number, will dine at the historic Waterloo Table, laid with the Grand Service: over 4,000 pieces of silver-gilt cutlery, dishes, goblets and egg cups. It takes five full days to set the table, which spans nearly half the length of a football pitch.

DESSERT DIPLOMACY

Behind the glitter, however, is calculated diplomacy. "Keir Starmer has cleverly used the King to lure Trump here and create the atmosphere for serious discussion," said Vickers. "It's about building goodwill, and using that goodwill to talk frankly, whether about trade, Ukraine or NATO."

That opportunity arrives on Thursday, when Trump and Starmer are scheduled to meet privately at Chequers, the prime minister's official country retreat. It is expected to be the most politically substantive moment of the visit.

A CAREFULLY SCRIPTED GAMBLE

The UK's decision to host Trump again, and to do so with such fanfare, has not come without criticism. Protests are expected in central London, and some observers question whether a lavish royal welcome gives undue legitimacy to a controversial leader. But for Downing Street, the calculation is simple: Trump responds to grandeur. "If this helps keep the special relationship alive," said one unnamed official, "then a few tiaras are a small price to pay." As the trumpets are tuned and carriages polished, Britain is once again turning to its ancient institutions to do what modern diplomacy sometimes cannot — charm, impress and influence. —*PTI*

PHOTO: X

NY Guv Hochul endorses Mamdani for mayor

NEW YORK, 15 SEPT

New York Governor Kathy Hochul has extended her support behind Zohran Mamdani in the race for New York City mayor, labelling it one of his most crucial endorsements. In an opinion piece for the New York Times, she stressed their shared commitment to tackling the affordability crisis in the city. "I heard of a leader who is focused on making New York City affordable," Hochul stated. Mamdani, a 33-year-old democratic socialist, acknowledged the endorsement as a sign of a growing movement. As other candidates ramp up attacks against him, Mamdani emphasised, "I look forward to fighting alongside her to continue her track record of putting money back in New Yorkers' pockets.". *—PTI*

Australia, PNG to sign pact amid China's influence

MELBOURNE, 15 SEPT

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese announced a significant new security agreement with Papua New Guinea, enhancing regional defence cooperation. The pact aims to curb China's growing influence in the South Pacific. "It is a very significant upgrade in our defence relationship," Albanese stated. Set to be signed this week, the deal will allow mutual support between the nations' armed forces and enable citizens to serve in either military. Concerns regarding third-party partnerships and national sovereignty are prevalent in the negotiations. Albanese stressed that this "transformational agreement" replaces a 1977 pact, as Australia also seeks to strengthen ties with Fiji and Tonga amid shifting geopolitical dynamics. *—PTI*

Ebola vaccinations begin in Southern Congo

LAGOS, 14 SEPT

The World Health Organisation has commenced vaccinations against Ebola in Congo's southern Kasai province, following a recent outbreak. At least 16 fatalities and 68 suspected cases have been reported since the announcement earlier this month. The WHO has dispatched an initial 400 doses of the Ervebo vaccine, with additional supplies expected soon. "The operation has been hampered by limited access and scarce funds," revealed the WHO. A total of 45,000 extra vaccines have been approved by the International Coordinating Group on Vaccine Provision. This outbreak marks Congo's 16th since 1976, caused by the Zaire strain, adding to worries amid ongoing conflicts with rebel groups affecting the region's health infrastructure. *—PTI*

Turkish court to decide on Oppn's legitimacy

ANKARA, 15 SEPT

A Turkish court is poised to rule on the internal leadership election of the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), which may reinstate former leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu. The congress in November 2023 allegedly involved electoral fraud, including vote buying. The CHP denies these claims, calling the legal action a politically motivated effort by President Erdogan's government. "We view this case as a broader crackdown on the CHP," critics argue. If annulled, it could exacerbate internal divisions. Kilicdaroglu has indicated he may return to leadership, but his popularity has waned following electoral defeats. *—PTI*

Israel wants to halt Gaza talks: Qatar

Muslim nations called out the 'genocide'

DUBAI, 15 SEPT

Qatar's emir accused Israel of trying to derail Gaza ceasefire talks by attacking Hamas in Doha. this comes as Arab and Muslim leaders held emergency talks on Monday. Qatar hosted a summit of leaders of Arab and Islamic nations on Monday in the hopes of presenting a united response to Israel's attack.

He called Israeli "aggression blatant, treacherous, cowardly".

Israel launched its invasion of Gaza in response to Hamas' 7 October, 2023, attack, and since then it has attacked the group and Iran's Axis of Resistance elsewhere, including in Iran, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen and now Qatar.

That's led to anger among Mideast nations enraged by the Palestinian killings in Gaza — and a growing concern that the US commitment to protect Gulf Arab states may not be strong enough.

However, it remains unclear just what the summit will be able to achieve. Qatar has served as a key mediator for a ceasefire.

"If Israel wishes to assassinate the Hamas leaders, why then engage in negotiations?" Qatar emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani asked.

He denounced Israel over "genocide" in Gaza. Israel denies it saying Hamas is prolonging the war.

Other attendees were Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi and Syria's interim president, Ahmad al-Sharaa, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.Iran, which hit a base in Qatar in June, is attending the summit too.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio made a trip to the summit soon after meeting Israeli Prime Minister. *— PTI*

Though Qatar has served as a key mediator for a ceasefire, it remains unclear just what the summit will be able to achieve

50 people were killed in Israeli strikes in Gaza on Monday

Rubio, Bibi vow to eliminate Hamas

Hints that a diplomatic solution is unlikely

WASHINGTON, 15 SEPT

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed on Monday that Hamas must be eliminated and all hostages released for there to be peace in Gaza. They said that it was unlikely that they could find a diplomatic solution to conflict.

"As long as (Hamas is) around, there will be no peace in this region because they are not agents of peace. They are agents of barbarism," Rubio said at a joint press conference with Netanyahu.

Rubio had come to Israel seeking answers about how Israel intended to proceed in Gaza and assess interest in Qatar, which Jerusalem recently attacked.

Rubio and Netanyahu said that the only way to peace is the complete destruction of Hamas and the return of all hostages, living and dead.

"Israel has no greater ally than the US," Rubio said.

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio visit the Western Wall, the holiest Jewish site in Jerusalem *PHOTO: PTI*

Netanyahu said that Israel was not ruling out future strikes.

"The strike sent a clear message to Hamas leaders: 'You can try to run, but we will find you,'" he said.

Netanyahu claimed there is "immense hypocrisy" among those who criticised the Qatar strikes, even though US President Donald Trump was one of them. Trump said that Qatar was a "great ally" and told Israel to "be careful"

Rubio added that the global move to recognise a Palestinian state is actually counterproductive to peace efforts and suggested that such proclamations are self-serving.

"The only impact they actually have is it makes Hamas feel more emboldened," he said.

After the talks, Rubio flew to Qatar. *—Agencies*

Stop buying Russian oil: Trump to NATO, EU

WASHINGTON, 15 SEPT

US President Donald Trump called on NATO and European nations to take stronger action against Russia, criticising Europe for continuing to buy oil from Moscow.

"They're not doing the job. NATO has to get together. Europe has to get together. Europe is my friend, but Europe is buying oil from Russia," Trump said told press. "And the sanctions that they're putting on are not tough enough. And I'm willing to do sanctions, but they're going to have to toughen up."

"Just to clarify, you wouldn't move ahead until NATO moves ahead. Well, I'm ready to move ahead, but they have to do it.... Look, they're buying a lot of oil from Russia," he added.

He also criticised European nations for continuing to import liquefied natural gas from Russia. "The deal is they're not supposed (to buy from Russia) whether it's natural gas or whether it's cigarettes."

Trump had earlier written to NATO asking them to impose 50 per cent to 100 per cent tariffs on China, Russia's largest oil buyer.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jiano on Monday called the move "unilateral bullying and threatened to implement countermeasures. *—Agencies*

50% of Russian drone attacks on Ukraine leave fragments in Romania

Trump says TikTok deal done, will call Xi

WASHINGTON, 15 SEPT

President Donald Trump said that the US may soon strike a deal with China regarding "a certain company that young people in our Country very much wanted to save"

Trump's comment on his social media site Truth suggests that the company is TikTok, the social media company associated with China that US law requires to be sold or else cease operations.

Trump also said that he would be speaking on Friday with Chinese leader Xi Jinping. But there was no immediate confirmation from China.

The Republican president has repeatedly extended the deadline on TikTok's fate. TikTok is one of more than 100 apps developed in last decade by ByteDance, a tech firm founded in 2012 by Chinese entrepreneur Zhang Yiming and headquartered in Beijing's Haidian district.

In 2016, ByteDance launched a short-form video platform called Douyin in China and made the international version TikTok.

President Donald Trump speaks with reporters before he departs on Air Force One at Morristown Airport, Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

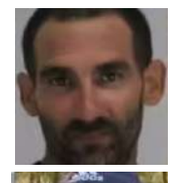
> **When foreign companies who are building extremely complex products, machines, and various other 'things,' come into the US.... I want them to bring their people of expertise for a period of time to.... train our people.... as they phase out of our country, and back into their land**
>
> —Donald Trump, US President

It was the first Chinese platform to make serious inroads in the West. US officials expressed concerns about the company's ownership, pointing to laws in China that require Chinese companies to hand over data requested by the government

—Salar News with Agencies

Won't be soft on illegals: Don on Indian man's murder

HOUSTON/NEW YORK, 15 SEPT



Trump has described the Indian-origin motel manager brutally beheaded in Dallas as a "well-respected person" and said that the time for being "soft on illegal immigrant criminals is over".

Chandra Mouli "Bob" Nagamallaiah, 50, was killed last week at the Downtown Suites motel by co-worker **Yordanis Cobos-Martinez**, a 37-year-old undocumented Cuban immigrant with a violent criminal history.

"I am aware of the terrible reports regarding the murder of Chandra Nagamallaiah, a well-respected person in Dallas, Texas, who was brutally beheaded, in front of his wife and son," Trump said in a post on Truth Social on Sunday.

Trump said that the accused in the case was previously arrested for "terrible crimes", including child sex abuse, grand theft auto, and false imprisonment, but was released under his "incompetent" predecessor Joe Biden because Cuba did not want "such an evil person in their country." *—PTI*

Water, Resources, & Irrigation Minister Kulman Ghising; Finance Minister Rameshwor Khanal; Home & Law Minister Om Prakash Aryal *PHOTO: PTI*

NEPAL BEGINS REFILLING CABINET WITH THREE NEW MINISTER

KATHMANDU, 15 SEPT

Nepal President Ramchandra Paudel on Monday administered the oath of office to three ministers inducted by newly appointed caretaker Prime Minister Sushila Karki into her cabinet.

Karki, 73, the Himalayan nation's first woman Prime Minister, assumed office on Sunday. She inducted Kulman Ghising, Rameshwor Khanal, and Om Prakash Aryal as ministers later in the day.

The swearing-in ceremony of the three ministers took place at the President's Office, Sheetal Niwas, Maharjgunj, here.

Former finance secretary Khanal has been sworn in as Finance Minister, while former Nepal Electricity Authority managing director Ghising has taken charge of three portfolios: energy, water resources and irrigation; physical infrastructure and transport; and urban development. Aryal, an advocate, has been sworn in as Minister for Home Affairs and for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs. After the ceremony, they assumed their respective offices. *—PTI*

DON THREATENS TO CALL NATIONAL EMERGENCY IN DC OVER ICE ROW

Trump has threatened to call a national emergency and federalise Washington DC after the city's mayor, Muriel Bowser, said its police would not cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Trump had earlier deployed the National Guard and federal officers to DC for a crackdown on crime and homelessness. He claimed that if Bowser did not cooperate with ICE, "crime would come roaring back". On Truth Social, he said that he'll call a "national emergency" if he has to.

DNA EVIDENCE CONFIRMS CHARLIE KIRK'S KILLER, SAYS KASH PATEL

DNA on a towel wrapped around a rifle found near where conservative activist Charlie Kirk was assassinated matched that of the 22-year-old accused in the killing, FBI Director Kash Patel said on Monday. Investigators also have used DNA evidence to link the suspect, Tyler Robinson, with a screwdriver recovered from the rooftop where the fatal shot was fired, Patel told Fox News Channel on Monday. Utah is preparing to file capital murder charges against Robinson as early as Tuesday.

Man arrested for racially motivate rape of Sikh woman in UK

LONDON, 15 SEPT

A man in his 30s has been arrested on suspicion of rape following a racially aggravated sexual assault on a Sikh woman in Oldbury, West Midlands. The incident, which has shocked the local community, is under investigation by West Midlands Police, who confirmed the woman, in her 20s, is receiving support.

Chief Superintendent Kim Madill stated, "This is a significant development... We would urge people not to speculate as we work to identify all those involved." Preet Kaur Gill, MP, condemned the attack, asserting, "She does belong here... Racism and misogyny have no place in Oldbury."

Local MP Edgbaston added, "The rise in overt racism... is deeply concerning," pledging to work with police for safety.

Sikh organisations are mobilising support, with community prayers held for the victim, who expressed gratitude for the solidarity. *—PTI*

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

Rogen's 'The Studio' breaks Emmys comedy record

LOS ANGELES, 15 SEPT

'The Studio' turned the Emmys into a wrap party, winning best comedy series and breaking a comedy record for victories in a season with 13, as 'Adolescence' and 'The Pitt' took the night's other top prizes.

"I'm legitimately embarrassed by how happy this makes me," series co-creator Seth Rogen said.

All four of the Emmys handed out during Sunday night's CBS telecast from the Peackock Theater in Los Angeles, including for lead comedy actor and comedy director, went to Rogen.

Along with the comedy series award, he won best directing with 'Studio' co-creator and longtime collaborator Evan Goldberg, and best writing with Goldberg and others.

Cristin Milioti won best actress in a limited series for 'The Penguin' while Katherine LaNasa won best supporting actress for the HBO Max medical series 'The Pitt'.

Netflix's 'Adolescence' took home six, including best actor for co-creator Stephen Graham, and best supporting actor for 15-year-old Owen Cooper, who became the youngest Emmy winner in over 40 years.

Meanwhile, Stephen Colbert won the outstanding talk series late-night show for the 'The Late Show with Stephen Colbert', six months before it goes off air.

'Adolescence' swept the Emmys and took home the 'outstanding limited or anthology series' award *PHOTO: PTI*

FREE PALESTINE

Jean Smart won best actress in a comedy for 'Hacks' for the fourth time, at 73 extending her own record for the oldest woman ever to win the category. Smart's castmate Hannah Einbinder, took best supporting actress in a comedy.

She cursed ICE and ended her speech by saying "Free Palestine!" *—PTI*

Javier Bardem : Can't work with genocide supporters

Javier Bardem, nominated for supporting actor for in 'Monsters: The Lyle and Erik Menendez Story' wore a traditional Palestinian keffiyeh scarf and said on the red carpet, "Here I am, denouncing the genocide in Gaza... I cannot work with someone who justifies or supports (it)."

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Gold prices drop by Rs 500 to Rs 1.13 lakh/10g

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

Gold prices retreated from record levels, dropping by Rs 500, in the national capital on Monday amid firm global trends. According to the All India Sarafa Association, standard gold of 99.9 per cent purity fell by Rs 500 to Rs 1,13,300 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes) on Monday, snapping its four-day winning streak. On Friday, it had rallied by Rs 700 to a record of Rs 1,13,800 per 10g. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity also retreated by Rs 500 to Rs 1,12,800 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes). The yellow metal had closed at Rs 1,13,300 per 10g in the previous market session. Spot gold traded marginally higher at USD 3,645.12 per ounce while silver was quoted at USD 42.20 per ounce. *—PTI*

Rupee rises by 6P, closes at 88.20 against USD

MUMBAI, 15 SEPT

The rupee witnessed range-bound trading and settled higher by 6 paise at 88.20 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, as the domestic unit was caught between worries over US trade tariffs and hopes of a FED rate cut. Forex traders said, likely intervention of the RBI has helped in controlling volatility and preventing a quick depreciation of the local unit. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 88.25, then touched an intraday low of 88.30 and a high of 88.13 against the greenback during the day. The domestic unit settled for the day at 88.20 (provisional), higher by 6 paise over its previous close. Meanwhile, the dollar index fell 0.07 per cent to 97.48. *—PTI*

Exports up by 6.7% to $35.1B, imports drop by 10%

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

India's exports rose by 6.7 per cent to USD 35.1 billion in August, while imports declined by 10.12 per cent to USD 61.59 billion, according to official data released on Monday. Exports were worth USD 32.89 billion in August last year and imports stood at USD 68.53 billion. Trade deficit during August 2025 was USD 26.49 billion as against USD 35.64 billion in the year-ago month. During April-August 2025-26, exports stood at USD 184.13 billion, while imports were at USD 306.52 billion. Briefing the media on the data, commerce secretary Sunil Barthwal said despite the global uncertainties and trade policy uncertainties, India's exporters have done extremely well. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Delhi Airport's upgraded Terminal 2 opens on 26 Oct

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

The upgraded Terminal 2 at Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) will commence operations on 26 October, raising the airport's overall annual passenger handling capacity to 100 million. The terminal, originally constructed 40 years ago, has been undergoing renovations since its closure in April this year. According to airport operator Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), "From the intervening night of 25-26 October, 2025, approximately 120 daily domestic flights operated by Air India and Indigo are set to shift operations to the upgraded Terminal 2." Currently, both Terminals 1 and 3 are operational, while IGIA manages around 1,400 flight movements daily with four runways, making it the busiest airport in India. *—PTI*

I-T filing portal faces glitch; no extension for deadline

As per data, over 6 cr ITRs were filed till 13 Sept afternoon

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

The Income Tax Department's I-T return filing portal faced huge traffic as the deadline for filing returns ends on Monday, leading to netizens complaining of glitches and demanding an extension of the 15 September deadline.

The department, however, said that the portal was working fine and gave no indication of extending the deadline for filing of income tax returns (ITRs) by individuals, HUFs and those who do not have to get their accounts audited for financial year 2024-25 (AY 2025-26).

The last date to file ITRs without penalty is 15 September for income earned in 2024-25 fiscal.

A number of chartered accountants and individuals have taken to social media over the past couple of days claiming that the I-T portal is facing glitches while making tax payment and downloading Annual Information Statement (AIS).

On Monday, netizens even complained that they were unable to log into the e-fling portal *PHOTO: FREEPIK*

On Monday, netizens even complained that they were unable to log in into the e-fling portal.

In a late night post on X on 14 September, the department termed "fake" a statement of extension of deadline, and asked taxpayers to only rely on official updates on @IncomeTaxIndia. "The due date for filing ITRs remains 15.09.2025," it said.

Replying to a post which claimed that there were issues in uploading ITR and tax payment, the department said, "The e-filing portal is working fine. Please clear your browser cache or try accessing the portal through a different browser".

It also asked people to share their details (along with PAN and mobile number) to e-mail id orm@cpc.incometax.gov.in.

Over 6 crore ITRs were filed till afternoon of 13 September, as per data shared by the tax department.

ITR filings have shown consistent growth over the years, reflecting rising compliance and widening of the tax base. *—PTI*

WPI inflation rises to 4-month high of 0.52% in Aug

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

Wholesale price inflation rose to a four-month high of 0.52 per cent in August as prices of food articles and manufactured items inched up, even though fuel and power basket witnessed easing.

Reversing the deflationary trend of the past two months, (-) 0.58 in July and (-) 0.19 per cent in June, the Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation rose to its highest level since April, when it was 0.85 per cent.

Wholesale price inflation was 1.25 per cent in August last year.

"Positive rate of inflation in August 2025 is primarily due to an increase in prices of food products, manufacturing, non-food articles, non-metallic mineral products and transport equipment etc," the industry ministry said in a statement on Monday.

Deflation in food articles narrowed to 3.06 per cent in August, from 6.29 per cent in the previous month. Deflation in vegetables and pulses eased to 14.18 per cent and 14.85 per cent from 28.96 per cent and 15.12 per cent, respectively.

Deflation in food articles narrowed to 3.06 per cent in August, from 6.29 per cent in the previous month *PHOTO: ANI*

Narrower food WPI deflation and higher core inflation have offset the deeper deflation in fuel in August, Barclays said, adding it expects modest increases in WPI in the coming months.

In the case of manufactured products, inflation was higher at 2.55 per cent in August, as against 2.05 per cent in the month before.

Negative inflation or deflation in the 'fuel and power' basket was 3.17 per cent in August, as against 2.43 per cent in July. *—PTI*

Ola files Rs 400 cr claim under PLI plan

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

Ola Electric has filed a claim for approximately Rs 400 crore under the government's Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, bolstering its adherence to stringent localisation and regulatory standards, according to sources.

The company reportedly has eligible sales of around Rs 3,000 crore for FY25, which translates to an expected incentive of nearly Rs 400 crore. The incentive, calculated at a rate of 13 to 14 per cent, is expected to significantly bolster Ola's liquidity and positively impact its financial performance in the upcoming quarters. Notably, Ola was the sole two-wheeler Original Equipment Manufacturer to receive the PLI incentive last year, marking a significant milestone for both the company and the industry.

Ola Electric has also recently achieved certification for compliance with PLI eligibility for its Gen 3 scooter portfolio, set to enhance profitability from Q2 FY26 onwards. *—PTI*

China says Nvidia violated antimonopoly laws

LONDON, 15 SEPT

Chinese regulators said on Monday that a preliminary investigation found that chipmaker Nvidia violated the country's anti-monopoly laws.

The State Administration for Market Regulation said in a one-sentence statement that it would carry out "further investigation" into Nvidia, the world's leading semiconductor manufacturer. The statement said the investigation centred on Nvidia's purchase of network and data transmission company Mellanox Technologies. Nvidia didn't respond immediately to a request for comment.

Regulators said last year that they were investigating the company for suspected violations stemming from the USD 6.9 billion acquisition of Mellanox in 2019.

The decision ratchets up pressure on the US as officials from Washington hold trade talks with Beijing's officials in Spain this week. *—PTI*

AI adoption can add $500B to GDP by 2035: NITI report

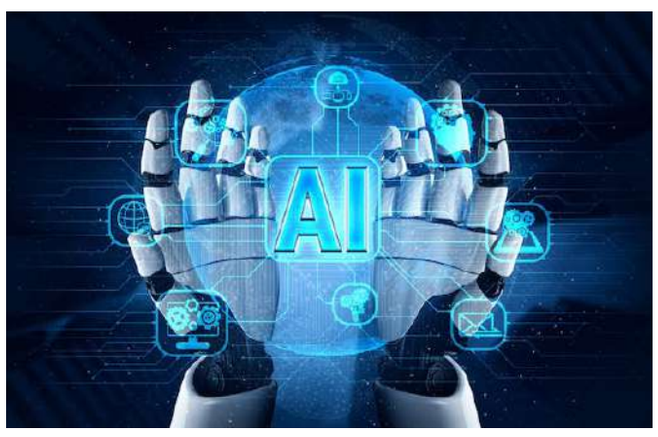
NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

Accelerated adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) across industries can contribute USD 500-600 billion to India's GDP by 2035 on the back of increased productivity and efficiency in the workforce, a NITI Aayog report said on Monday.

The report titled 'AI for Viksit Bharat: The Opportunity for Accelerated Economic Growth' further said over the next decade, the adoption of AI across sectors is expected to add USD 17–26 trillion to the global economy.

"India's combination of a large STEM workforce, expanding R&D ecosystem, and growing digital and technology capabilities position the country to participate in this transformation, with the potential to capture 10–15 per cent of global AI value," it said.

According to the Aayog, projections show that while AI will create many new roles, it will also displace many existing jobs, particularly in clerical, routine, and low-skill segments. It said the analysis shows that financial services and manufacturing can be most impacted and might have up to 20-25 per cent of their sectoral GDP attributed to AI by 2035.



AI-led productivity and efficiency improvement could unlock USD 50-55 billion in financial services, over and above the current estimated growth for the sector by 2035.

According to the report, AI-enabled systems can reshape credit decisioning, collections, and portfolio management. *—PTI*

Adani Group wins contract for ₹4,081 cr ropeway project

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

Billionaire Gautam Adani-led group's flagship firm has won a contract to build a nearly 13-km-long ropeway project connecting Sonprayag with Kedarnath, the company said on Monday.

Sonprayag is the final point accessible by road for pilgrims heading to the Kedarnath Temple. The Union cabinet had in March this year approved the ropeway project, expected to cost about Rs 4,081 crore, to provide pilgrims with a faster, more comfortable and environmentally friendly mode of travel.

Spanning a total distance of 12.9 kilometres, the ropeway will connect Sonprayag to Kedarnath, a journey traditionally completed via a strenuous 16-km uphill trek or by other means like ponies, palanquins and helicopters.

The project will be executed by AEL's Roads, Metro, Rail, and Water (RMRW) division.

"Once operational, the 12.9 km ropeway project will reduce travel time from an arduous 9-hour trek to just 36 minutes, making the pilgrimage far easier and safer. The ropeway will be able to carry 1,800 passengers per hour per direction, serving lakhs of pilgrims each year," it said.

Kedarnath witnesses around 20 lakh pilgrims annually, highlighting the importance of this project.

The ropeway is part of the National Ropeways Development Programme - Parvatmala Pariyojana. *—PTI*

NSE DOWN 44.80 PTS

Sensex drops by 119 pts, Nifty snaps 8-day uptrend

MUMBAI, 15 SEPT

Benchmark Sensex dropped nearly 119 points while Nifty snapped its eight-day winning run in a volatile trade on Monday due to profit-taking in IT and auto shares ahead of the US Fed policy meeting.

Ending its five-day rally, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined by 118.96 points or 0.15 per cent to settle at 81,785.74. During the day, it hit a high of 81,998.51 and a low of 81,744.70.

The 50-share NSE Nifty settled lower by 44.80 points or 0.18 per cent to 25,069.20, halting its eight-day uptrend.

Investors stayed on the sidelines as markets await the outcome of this week's US Federal Reserve policy meeting, analysts said.

Among Sensex firms, Mahindra & Mahindra, Asian Paints, Infosys, Titan, Sun Pharma, Tata Consultancy Services, Tech Mahindra and Power Grid were the major laggards.

However, Bajaj Finance, Eternal, UltraTech Cement and Reliance Industries were among the gainers.

Broader markets were positive with the Smallcap gauge climbing 0.66 per cent and the Midcap index gaining 0.40 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, BSE Focused IT dropped the most by 0.63 per cent, followed by IT (0.60 per cent), consumer durables (0.50 per cent), teck (0.45 per cent) and auto (0.32 per cent).

Realty jumped 2.47 per cent, while capital goods, industrials, telecommunication and power also advanced. *—PTI*

New investors entering mkt drop by 18% MoM: NSE

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

The number of new investors entering the Indian stock markets saw a notable decline in August, with additions dropping by 18.3 per cent month-on-month, as reported by the National Stock Exchange (NSE). Only 1.23 million new investors registered in August, marking the third-lowest monthly increase in the current financial year.

The report stated, "While 1.23 million new investors were added during the month, the pace of additions moderated, declining 18.3 per cent MoM." Despite this slowdown, the NSE's overall registered investor base grew to 119 million by the end of August 2025.

Broader macroeconomic challenges have impacted investor sentiment. Since beginning of 2025, momentum of new registrations has decreased, further emphasising cautious state of equity markets. *—ANI*

FM: Rules should foster innovation, not suppress it

NEW DELHI, 15 SEPT

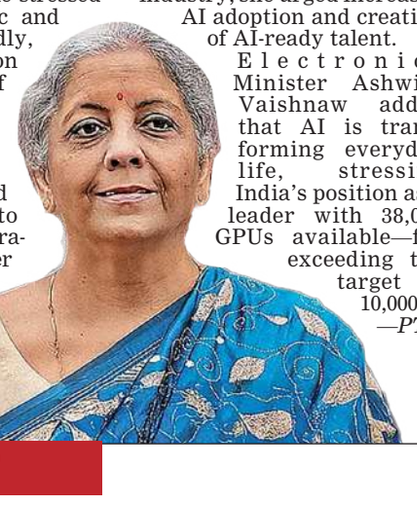
- Sitharaman advocated for regulatory sandboxes, allowing testing of mechanisms that promote innovation while ensuring oversight.

Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** highlighted the importance of balanced regulation to foster technological innovation, particularly in artificial intelligence (AI), without stifling progress.

She launched the report 'AI for Viksit Bharat: The Opportunity for Accelerated Economic Growth', emphasising the government's commitment to responsible AI adoption across sectors.

Sitharaman advocated for regulatory sandboxes, allowing testing of mechanisms that promote innovation while ensuring oversight.

"We do not want regulation that wipes out technology. We want responsible application," she stated. She stressed that AI is dynamic and progressing rapidly, requiring regulation to keep pace: "If technology is on a sprint, regulation must be on the sprint too."



The minister noted AI's potential to improve urban infrastructure and deliver in-situ solutions, enabling people to remain in their communities. "AI should serve for the common good," she affirmed, calling for all districts to become hubs of innovation and development.

Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guidance, AI initiatives have gained momentum through NITI Aayog. Sitharaman warned of challenges such as the need for upskilling human resources to prevent demographic setbacks. Addressing industry, she urged increased AI adoption and creation of AI-ready talent.

Electronics Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw added that AI is transforming everyday life, stressing India's position as a leader with 38,000 GPUs available—far exceeding the target of 10,000. *—PTI*

65,000 CUSTOMERS HIT

ANZ to pay record $160M fine for misconduct

MELBOURNE, 15 SEPT

The previous record was USD 75 million imposed on the Sydney-based bank Westpac for widespread compliance failures in 2022 *PHOTO: ANI*

- The fines would set a new record amount imposed on a single entity for corporate misconduct by the ASIC, the national company and financial services regulator.

One of Australia's largest banks said Monday it agreed to pay a record 240 million Australian dollars ($160 million) in penalties for corporate misconduct affecting almost 65,000 customers and the federal government.

Melbourne-based ANZ, also known as Australia and New Zealand Banking Group, and the Australian Securities and Investments Commission said in statements they will ask a federal court to endorse the penalties for four separate prosecutions.

The fines would set a new record amount imposed on a single entity for corporate misconduct by the ASIC, the national company and financial services regulator. The previous record was $75 million imposed on the Sydney-based bank Westpac for widespread compliance failures in 2022.

"The penalties we'll be asking the court to impose including a record penalty ASIC has sought for unconscionable conduct reflects the seriousness and number of breaches of law, the vulnerable position that ANZ put its customers in and the repeated failure to rectify crucial issues," said Joe Longo, ASIC chair.

ANZ admitted failing to refund charges to thousands of dead customers and failing to respond to hundreds of customer hardship notices, in some case for over two years, the regulator said.

The bank made false and misleading statements about savings interest rates and failed to pay the promised interest rate to tens of thousands of customers. ANZ also acted unconscionably with the Australian government while managing $9.3 billion in bonds over two years, it said. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Diksha stays in Top 20 of LET Order of Merit at Swiss Open

ZUG, 15 SEPT

Golfer Diksha Dagar continues to be the top Indian on the Ladies European Tour's Order of Merit in 19th place after the Swiss Ladies Open. The two-time LET winner, who took a month-long break, skipping three events, is still well-placed in the Merit list with half a dozen events left on the schedule. Diksha, who has five Top-10s this season, including a runner-up place, will play in France next two weeks before coming back home for the Indian Open, where she has finished in the Top-3 in the past. Next behind Diksha in the Order of Merit is rookie Avani Prashanth (43rd), and she also skipped the Swiss Ladies Open and will play the La Sella Open.—*PTI*

Sreeshankar fails to qualify for long jump final

DUBAI, 15 SEPT

India's disappointing campaign at the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo continued on Monday with long jumper Murali Sreeshankar, sprint hurdler Tejas Shirse, and steeplechasers Parul Chaudhary and Ankita Dhyani failing to progress beyond the first round. Sreeshankar came back in July after sitting out for more than a year due to a serious knee injury, but a late charge helped the 26-year-old Indian to qualify for his fourth World Championships by grabbing the last spot available through the rankings route. In Tokyo, Asian Games silver medallist Sreeshankar had to either achieve the 8.15m mark or finish inside the top 12 to reach the final. However, he could only produce jumps of 7.78, 7.59m, and 7.70m in the qualification round. Earlier in the day, Parul and Ankita had a disappointing outing in the women's 3000m steeplechase heats. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Mohammed Siraj named ICC Player of the Month

DUBAI, 15 SEPT

India pacer Mohammed Siraj was on Monday named ICC Player of the Month for August following his heroic effort in the fifth and final Test against England.Orla Prendergast of Ireland, too, was named player of the month alongside Siraj. Siraj's superb match-winning effort on the final day of the Test series against England helped India win The Oval Test match by six runs. Siraj grabbed three wickets on the dramatic final morning of the fifth match to finish with nine wickets in the match as the Indian team drew the series 2-2.—*PTI*

New FIH Pro League season to begin on 9 Dec

LAUSANNE, 15 SEPT

The 2025-26 season of the FIH Hockey Pro League will get underway on 9 December in Argentina and Ireland, with a record 144 matches lined up across 10 host nations. The seventh edition of the "League of the Best" will feature two newcomers Ireland women and Pakistan men who have been promoted from the FIH Hockey Nations Cup 2024-25. The winners of both the men's and women's leagues will directly qualify for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games. The season will get underway with Germany taking on Belgium men in Ireland, while action will continue later in the day in Argentina with the men's champions, the Netherlands, facing League debutants Pakistan.—*PTI*

PCB sacks top official after 'handshake' row

India not to share dias with PCB head if they win final

DUBAI, 15 SEPT

India and Pak players did not shake hands PHOTO: X/@ASIACUP

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has suspended its Director of International Cricket, Usman Wahla, following the fallout from the no-handshake controversy during the India-Pakistan Asia Cup 2025 clash. According to ASports, Wahla was removed for failing to file a formal complaint against match referee Andy Pycroft, whom Pakistan holds responsible for mishandling the situation.

The incident gained traction after both teams avoided any physical interaction during warm-ups and, at the toss, captains Suryakumar Yadav and Salman Ali Agha handed their team sheets directly to Pycroft, skipping the traditional exchange.

The decision from the Indian side was not spontaneous. It is understood the BCCI and team management held a closed-door meeting to finalise their position, amid mounting political pressure and social media outrage over playing Pakistan. Many critics accused the organisers of putting commercial interests above national sentiment, following the Pahalgam terror attack in April, which claimed 26 lives. Reports revealed that BCCI and broadcaster Sony LIV allegedly factored in potential losses of Rs 90–100 crore. Many tickets remained unsold, and visuals of empty seats added to the spectacle. India's stance was reportedly supported by head coach Gautam Gambhir and senior players, and was ultimately greenlit by top BCCI officials. The 'no handshake' decision is now a formal policy that will continue throughout the Asia Cup, including any possible rematches in the Super Four stage or the final on 28 September.

A senior BCCI official clarified the move: "There's no rule mandating handshakes. It's a goodwill gesture, not a legal requirement. Given the strained relationship, the Indian team isn't obligated to follow it."

Historically, refusing to shake hands for political reasons is not without precedent in international sport. While India has faced criticism for continuing to play Pakistan in cricket, the government's standing policy allows such fixtures at multi-nation tournaments. However, the broader motive is strategic. With cricket included in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics and India bidding to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games and the 2036 Olympics in Ahmedabad, pulling out of matches against Pakistan could harm India's international standing and Olympic hosting ambitions. —*PTI*

CHINA MASTERS SUPER 750

Lakshya, Satwik-Chirag eye first title of season

SHENZHEN, 15 SEPT

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty with Lakshya Sen PHOTO: PTI

Fresh from a final's appearance, Lakshya Sen will look to ride on his newfound momentum, while Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty too will aim to carry forward their consistency at the China Masters Super 750 badminton tournament beginning here on Tuesday.

Lakshya, who reached his first major final in two years at the just-concluded Hong Kong Open after a prolonged spell of poor form and fitness issues, opens against France's Toma Junior Popov.

The 24-year-old from Almora, who finished fourth at the Paris Olympics, hasn't been his best with multiple early exits, but he turned it around to make the summit clash.

"I just need to believe in myself more. I need to keep the same from day one, what I was doing, the process," he said.

Eighth seeds Satwik and Chirag have been India's most consistent performers this season, with six semifinal finishes, a second World Championships bronze, and a runner-up effort at Hong Kong last week. The Asian Games champions, still chasing their first crown of 2025, will start against Malaysia's Junaidi Arif and Roy King Yap.

It was their first final in 16 months, and while the Indians fell short, the performance underlined progress as they prepare to once again challenge the world's top pairs.

"I think the way we are playing, we are up right there. It's just a matter of time, and we should believe in ourselves," Satwik said on Sunday.

Youngster Ayush Shetty, who shocked Japan's Kodai Naraoka last week, will look for another strong run when he faces sixth seed Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei. Ayush had beaten the veteran en route to his maiden BWF title at the US Open Super 300 last June.

In women's singles, two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu will hope to rediscover her top game when she takes on Denmark's Julie Dawall Jakobsen.

The 30-year-old, ranked 14th, had stunned China's world No. 2 Wang Zhi Yi to reach the World Championships quarterfinals but faltered against Line Christophersen last week.

In women's doubles, the Panda sisters, Rutaparna and Swetaparna, face Malaysia's Ong Xin Yee and Carmen Ting.

In mixed doubles, Rohan Kapoor and Ruthvika Shivani Gadde will meet Japan's Yuichi Shimogami and Sayaka Hobara, while Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto, quarterfinalists at the World Championships, open against second seeds Feng Yan Zhe and Huang Dong Ping of China. —*PTI*

UAE's players celebrate the victory PHOTO: X/@ASIACUP

UAE beat Oman by 42 runs to keep Super 4 hopes alive

ABU DHABI, 15 SEPT

Skipper Muhammad Waseem and Alishan Sharafu struck quick-fire fifties before Junaid Siddique's (4/23) fine bowling display, as UAE overwhelmed Oman by 42 runs to keep their hopes of making the Super Four alive in the Asia Cup here on Monday.

Waseem anchored the UAE innings with a 69 off 54 balls, getting out only in the last over, while his opening partner Sharafu blazed away to a 38-ball 51 after a scratchy start to guide UAE to 172 for five after being sent in.

The total proved to be more than enough for the home team, and victory against Pakistan on Wednesday could take them into the next stage of the continental tournament, assuming India wins against Oman in their last group game.

Aryan Bisht and Vinayak Shukla tried to stabilise the innings as Oman reached 74 for five in 10 overs.

UAE 172 for 5 (Waseem 69, Sharafu 51, Ramanandi 2-24) beat Oman 130 (Bisht 24, Siddique 4-23) by 42 run rate and Sri Lanka (2.595) occupying second place in Group B, Bangladesh (-0.650) must win their final match to stay alive in the tournament. Against Sri Lanka, the top order failed miserably before Jaker Ali and Shamim Hossain salvaged the innings with an unbeaten 86-run partnership for the sixth wicket. —*PTI*

B'desh faces a trial against Afghanistan

DUBAI, 15 SEPT

Bangladesh vs Afghanistan Match starts at 8.00 pm IST

A faltering Bangladesh will face a stern trial by spin in their do-or-die Group B clash against Afghanistan in the Asia Cup here on Tuesday.

The Litton Das-led side opened their campaign on a bright note with a commanding win over Hong Kong, but their momentum came crashing down with a heavy defeat to Sri Lanka that left them third on the points table.

With Afghanistan (4.700) comfortably ahead on net

Central Zone players and staff celebrate with the trophy after winning the Duleep Trophy 2025 final match against South Zone at Bengaluru on Monday PHOTO: PTI

CZ beats South by six wickets

BENGALURU, 15 SEPT

Central Zone survived some nervous moments to beat South Zone by six wickets and clinch the Duleep Trophy after a hiatus of 11 years here on Monday.Chasing a modest target of 65, Central Zone's top-order batters were tested by South bowlers on a crumbling fifth-day track at the BCCI CoE grounds, but they did not have too many runs to defend.

Akshay Wadkar (19 not out, 52 balls) and first-innings centurion Yash Rathod (13 not out, 16 balls) were at the crease when Central eventually went past the target at 66 for four in 20.3 overs to annex their seventh title in Duleep Trophy.

Left-arm spinner Ankit Sharma accounted for Danish Malewar (5) with a delivery that spun sharply and took the edge of the Central opener's bat en route to wicketkeeper Mohammed Azharuddeen.

He later added the wicket of Central captain Rajat Patidar, who played a hurried slog sweep to get caught at mid-on by MD Nidheesh. Pacer Gurjapneet Singh, who earned an India A call on Sunday, picked up the scalps of Shubham Sharma and the promoted Saransh Jain, who was later adjudged player of the series, to create some anxious moments in the Central camp. But players of the match Rathod and Wadkar steered Central home without further damage.

Central Zone 511 (Rathod 194, Patidar 101, Jain 69, Gurjapneet 4-124) and 66 for 4 (Wadkar 19*, Rathod 13*, Gurjapneet 2-21) beat South Zone 149 (Tanmay 31, Jain 5-49, Kartikeya 4-53) and 426 (Ankit 99, Siddarth 84*, Kartikeya 4-110, Jain 3-130) by six wickets. —*PTI*

SUJEET SCARES RAHMAN BEFORE LOSING IN QF

ZAGREB, 15 SEPT

Sujeet Kalkal came close to toppling Paris Olympics silver medallist Rahman Mousa Amzoud Khalili of Iran before bowing out with a narrow 5-6 defeat, while other Indians crashed out without much resistance on the third day of the World Championship, here on Monday.

Sujeet appeared to be better than the 2022 world champion in terms of endurance as the formidable Iranian barely managed to finish the bout as the Indian had enough strength even at the fag end of a gruelling men's freestyle 65kg quarterfinal.Sujeet did not score any points, or rather make any move, in the first period, in which both wrestlers used their upper body strength. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Vaishali qualifies for Women's Candidates 2026

UZBEKISTAN, 15 SEPT

R. Vaishali successfully defended her title at the FIDE Women's Grand Swiss in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, on Monday to become the third Indian woman, after D i v y a D e s h m u k h and Koneru Humpy, to qualify for FIDE Women's Candidates 2026.

Divya and Humpy booked their Candidates' spots when both reached the FIDE Women's World Cup final in Georgia in June, where Divya won the title. —*PTI*

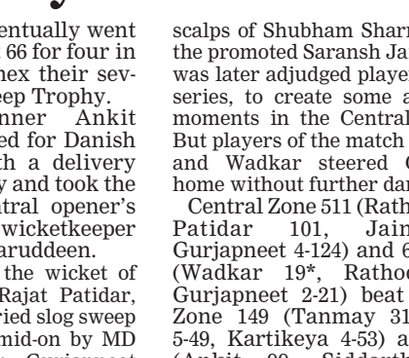
TRACK GREATNESS

Wanted to set high standards, and I did: Usain Bolt

TOKYO, 15 SEPT

On the night track turned to Jamaica once again to find the World's Fastest Man, the greatest Jamaican sprinter was in a sky box in the stadium his presence literally hovering over a sport that hasn't been the same since he left.

Oblique Seville might be the new 100-meter world champion. Usain Bolt remains the only track star of this century whose fame cascades well beyond sports.



Usain Bolt PHOTO: X/@ @USAINBOLT

Eight years after his retirement, nobody has come close to matching his times or his presence.

In an interview before Sunday night's races at the track worlds, he said he feels great about that, because "that's what I worked for.""When I was competing, I was working to break the benchmark," he said. "Now that I've retired, it's a great feeling to know that I'm the benchmark.

If you want to be the best, you want to be a legend. I wanted to set high standards, and I did. I'm happy about that."The numbers tell part of this story: Eight Olympic gold medals. Eleven gold medals at world championships. Three world records 9.58 seconds in the 100, 19.19 in the 200, and 36.84 in the 4x100 relay that still stand.

No runner has come within .12 seconds of either of his individual marks since he retired. —*PTI*

PREMIER LEAGUE

Manchester City humbles Manchester 3-0

MANCHESTE, 15 SEPT

Manchester City players celebrate after a goal during the soccer match in England PHOTO: X/@MANCITY

Manchester City is back to winning ways. Manchester United is back to square one.

City utterly dominated the 197th Manchester derby on Sunday, winning 3-0 on another humbling day for United coach Ruben Amorim. It could have been so much worse for the red half of Manchester as City threatened to turn it into a rout at the Etihad Stadium.

Haaland scored twice in the second half and also hit the post to make it seven goals in a week following the five he hit for Norway against Moldova on Tuesday.

Phil Foden opened the scoring for City with a header in the 18th minute, and Pep Guardiola's team never looked back. United has won just once in five games in all competitions this season - a 3-2 victory against Burnley, which required a stoppage-time penalty from Bruno Fernandes.

Barcelona routs Valencia 6-0

Raphinha, Robert Lewandowski, and Fermín López scored two goals each as Barcelona routed Valencia 6-0 in the Spanish league.

The match was played at the team's training facility because the Catalan club doesn't yet have the proper permits to reopen the renovated Camp Nou stadium.

Barcelona got the victory despite playing without the injured Lamine Yamal. It was the third win in four matches to open the season for Barcelona, which moved within two points of early league leader Real Madrid, which won 2-1 at Real Sociedad on Saturday. —*PTI*

Mariners eye fresh start to make mark in Asia

KOLKATA, 15 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

India's top football club Mohun Bagan Super Giant will look to underline their continental ambitions when they open their AFC Champions League 2 campaign against Turkmenistan's Ahal FK at the Salt Lake Stadium here on Tuesday.

The Kolkata giants, who secured direct entry into Asia's second-tier competition by defending their ISL Shield last season, are featuring in the event for the second year running and are determined to make a deeper run this time. Mohun Bagan SG were considered "withdrawn" from the 2024-25 season of the AFC Champions League 2 after refusing to travel to Iran for their October 2 match against Tractor SC, citing security concerns. The AFC had then said all of Mohun Bagan's results in Group A "stand cancelled" and would not count towards the final standings.

This time, the city heavyweights enter the international meet on the back of a mixed run in domestic competitions. —*PTI*